

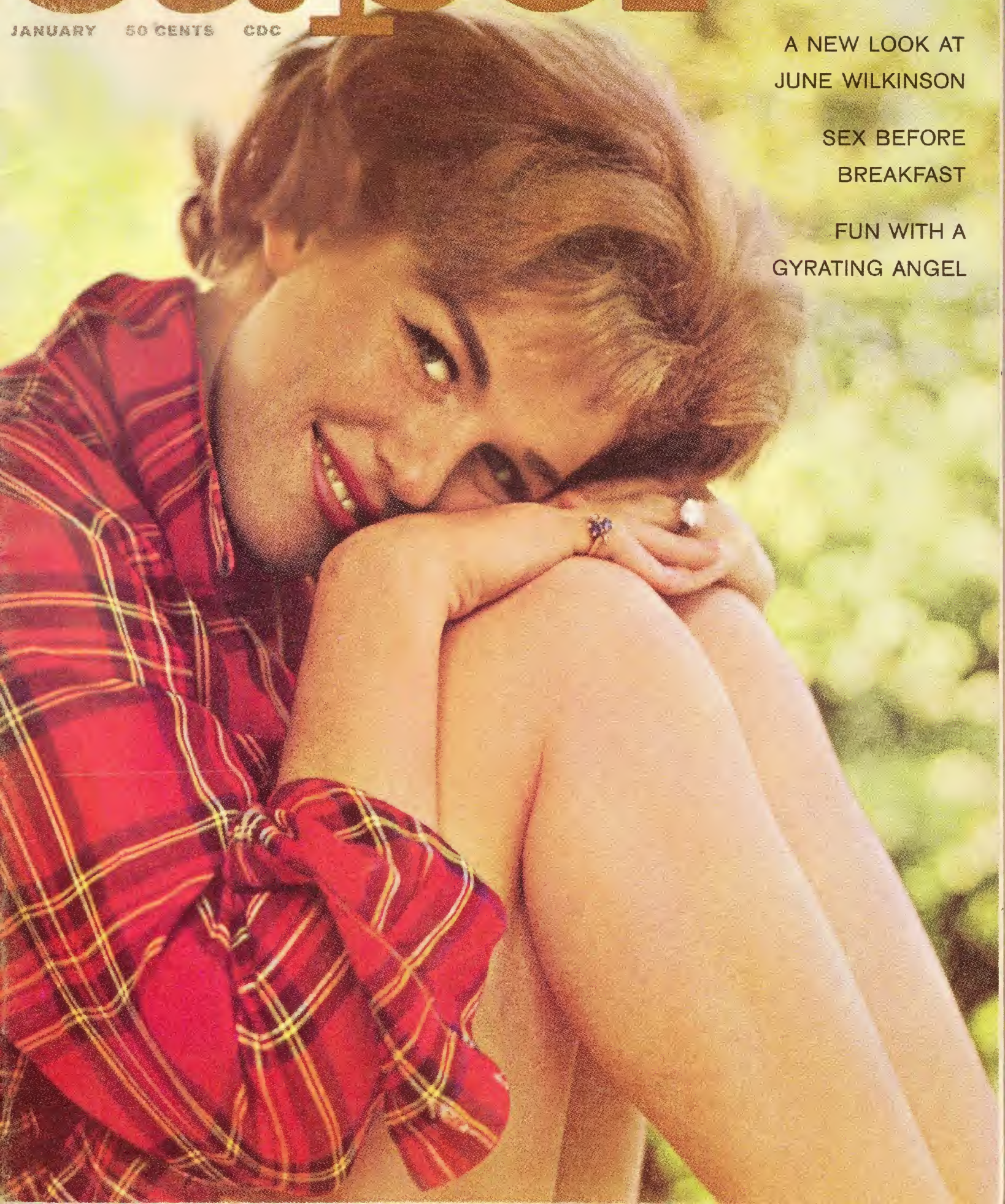
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JANUARY 50 CENTS CDC

A NEW LOOK AT
JUNE WILKINSON

SEX BEFORE
BREAKFAST

FUN WITH A
GYRATING ANGEL





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cap^{er}

January, 1960

Vol VI, No. 1

CAPER'S SEVENTEEN JANUARY FEATURES



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The Bitter Wood

His biggest mistake was sending Ellen back to the mountain

By Robert Gold

LUTHER SET THE rifle against a tree and wiped the sweat from his face and neck. The morning sun was higher over the mountain now. He had been three hours climbing the slopes up from the valley. He rested standing, thinking how he had never liked the mountain, even when he had come to Ellen's place.

He slung the gun under his arm and started up the path. The dry grass bristled beneath his heavy boots. There was no smell to the woods. He had noticed that early. The trees sat quietly in the still air and there was no smell to the moss. Like his heart, the earth was dry and burning.

He'd kill Ben sure this morning, he thought, and he put his long legs steadily along the trail.

He had made mistakes. The thought came to Luther that the biggest mistake was in sending Ellen back to the mountain, back to her father's place. But the mountain had seemed safer than the town when a girl was young and pretty and waiting for her marriage . . .

Ben, Ben—he drove the name into the soil with each hard step. He'd kill Ben sure this morning.

Luther was big, lean, young. His hand held steady but sweated against the gunstock. He came in rage but not blindly. He had in mind how different a thing this was for him. He had hunted cats and taken bear. But now he had a man in mind, and he knew it was very much a different thing.

The woods were dry and there was no life smell to them. The sun sank hot between the foliage, and Luther's shirt was plastered to his back. He thought how word might have gone before him from the valley. Ben might know he was coming. Ben might be stomach flat on the heights, looking down on him through gun-sights. . . .

Luther's chest muscles contracted, held tightly to his ribs. He went up swiftly, steadily as before, but now he scanned the forest ridges above him, watching for the glare of sunlight on gun metal.

The farmhouse sat in silence, without chimney smoke, without sound or movement. Luther came slowly into the clearing, his hands hard on the rifle.

Harsh and pitiful in the stillness, a hoarse croak erupted from the hen shack. The stocky, bearded mountain man came outside holding the legs of the slaughtered fowl. He saw Luther, stopped, and shook his head.

"Ellen's not here—"

"I'm looking for Ben, Hyas," Luther said.

The farmer shook his head again, his eyes holding to the rifle.

"Ben's not here."

Luther turned. "Don't be a fool—" Hyas called.

"I hear Ben's thinking of a wedding," Luther said slowly. "I'm thinking more about a funeral . . ."

"A girl's got leave to change her mind," Hyas said. "A man's got leave to see unmarried women—"

"Not a woman who's claimed," Luther said flatly. "Not a woman who's claimed to me."

The rooster was dripping by Hyas' shoes. It'll be Ben's blood soon, Luther thought, and the impatient rage twisted inside him.

Hyas was looking at his face, seeing what there was behind it.

"Go on home, Luther," Hyas said gently. "Sleep on it, think on it. You can't think a straight piece today, Luther."

"Your woods are dry, Hyas," Luther slung his gun. "There's no smell to them—"

"It's your heart—" Hyas called after him, standing with his cut rooster and calling after him, "it's your heart that's dry and bitter and chokes the smell. . . ."

Luther came to the fork in the trail and turned toward the Holden place. He took care now, stopped often, listening for steps in the brittle grass. He left the path and came up to the Holden house from the woods. He studied Ben's house a long time before he left the forest edge.

(Continued on the following page)

The Widow Holden sat on the screened porch watching him. Motionless in her rocker, white fingers tight on her cotton shawl, watching him come with his gun.

"Ben home?" he called to her.

She shook her head.

He thought of going into the house. But Ben wouldn't be home to let him come like this. He remembered a sixteen year old boy who came down once from his mountain to bury a father, Ben who sat dry eyed in church and went back with his mother to work a man's farm. No, Ben wouldn't be the one to be home and hiding.

He looked at the old woman. Is that our misery you sit with, he thought. Do you know that I'm going to kill your son and leave you alone on the mountain? But I didn't start it. I'm only finishing it . . .

Luther slung his gun and went, the work-aged Widow Holden wordless in her rocker watching.

There was a trace of smoke beyond the crest of the ridge. Old Macklin's getting careless, Luther thought. He worked higher into the brush. It was time to come whistling.

Macklin waved him up to the mash boiler.

"Now I like folks who make a good noise when they come calling!" the faded little man said heartily. He shoved a pistol into stained coveralls.

"Now, how you been, Luther? Set a while—" he pointed out a wooden keg. Luther shook his head.

"Going for rabbits?" Macklin said.

He knows, Luther thought. The word came, and they all knew.

"What'll it be—hot or cold?"

"Cold," Luther said.

Macklin rolled a jug over to him. Luther swung it up on his forearm, drank down a throatful of the cider.

"Now, that's none of my own stuff," Macklin grinned. "I don't go for raising soft drinks. . . ."

Luther listened to him, studying the clearing all the while.

"You won't find rabbits here—" the moonshiner said suddenly. "Set a while. I can tell you about rabbits . . ."

Luther sat on the keg, his rifle across his knees.

"Now, men know I'm not one to bear a grudge," Macklin rubbed a hand over the coarse black hair on his chin. "But I can't feel neighborly to Ben Holden after him running me off his property. . . ."

"Now, a man has claim to his own property, but cooking a little corn doesn't interfere with farming business. Ben was nasty when he sent me packing up the mountain . . ."

Luther sat listening. It could be that way—but Macklin couldn't be

overly trusted. There were some who said he was a sly fox. There were some who said Macklin was a mean, murderous fox.

"Believe it what it's worth," Macklin said, "Ben Holden is clearing timber below his piece. If a man gets set in the woods up a'ways, it'd be no time before Ben comes up past him . . ."

The two men looked at each other.

"I owe you the cider," Luther said. He got up, slung his rifle.

"Remember, now—" Macklin called after him, "I'm no man to bear a grudge . . ."

Luther crawled halfway into the thicket, stomach down in the grass. He had clear sight a hundred yards beyond the thicket to the path that ran from the bottom timber land up to the Holden place. He brought the rifle forward, the sun-hot barrel by his face as he waited.

Time inched by him, piled up, ate at his nerves. Wood ticks got inside his shirt, and he lay thinking that Macklin wasn't one to be trusted. Old Macklin might have gone to Ben. It could be that Ben was coming up behind him. It could be that Ben's gun was waiting behind him.

He had never wanted to kill a man before. The thought came unexpectedly and unwanted. But there was no law charge for men who stole women. No accounting for them—except a rifle's accounting.

The woods were quiet, and Luther was uneasy. The grass was close to him, yet it had no smell. He wondered why everything in the woods was dust dry to him. Time images paced his mind, insisting on their own way. . . .

They had gone fishing. Both of them almost twenty and now lazing on the green wet bank of the stream, feeling the gentle Sunday sun, listening to the stillness of the mountain noises, the soft running of the water.

"What are you going to make of yourself?" Ben asked.

"A farmer—what else?" Luther grinned and then was serious again because that was his nature. "I'm going to State College when I have the money saved. Agriculture, Ben—two years farming out of school books."

Ben nodded his approval. Handsome Ben, with his thick black hair and thin body hard from too much early work. Ben chewing the blade of grass and thinking of how it would be to go to State College. It was too far for Ben, too far because he never would be going, not with Mother Holden chair-ridden, not with the hill acres that fed them only grudgingly and had Ben chained forever to the mountain.

"Ben—" Luther said on sudden impulse, "can you weigh our luck? I

have three-hundred valley acres. I am beholden to nobody. I am free to go—because I am alone here as well as there. Can you weigh that and say my luck goes deeper than yours?"

Ben thought of the fertile valley acres, Luther's orphaned land. He thought of Luther's empty house and shook his head.

"Each man's luck is a thing apart," Ben said, "and is not to be weighed by another."

So they confirmed each other, and it had been a pleasant summer Sunday on the mountain . . .

* * *

"Ellen—" she had said.

He stood awkwardly on the town street, a wisp of crimson on his cheeks partly because he had not remembered her given name, partly because of the full bloom of her beneath the dress.

"Sure now—" he shook his head, "it's only—well, it's only that—"

She laughed, and he was relieved to see there was no mockery in the bright hazel eyes. "It's only that I was always 'Hyases little girl' and you," she said, "were always four years older . . ."

It was an easy calculation—she was nineteen.

"I've come to teach first grade," Ellen explained. "I'll be staying with the Millers."

"That's fine," Luther said. "I come to town Saturdays."

"That's fine," she said.

"Maybe, I'll see you . . ." he said it so that it was, perhaps but not quite, a question.

"Yes," she said, and it could or could not have been an answer.

He watched her walk down the street, watched the fabric tighten against her thighs, imagined how it would be without the dress—he had cursed his aching flesh then, told himself savagely there had to be more to it than that . . .

They sat on the lake shore, arms entwined, the night enfolding them. The crickets sang in the woods behind them and were echoed from across the water. Face turned to face, they sat and he kissed her, gently at first as he had kissed her before. Then his hunger forced her back against the sand. For a moment she responded and clung to him as his hands came to her. For a moment they were flooded with the same fire, but then she withdrew herself.

"Please," Luther whispered, "it will not matter—"

"It will," she said. "To me it will."

He turned from her in his disappointment, but Ellen bent over him, caressed his lips with hers, the stars sparkled in the stirring lake, and he

(Continued on page 11)



"This is the way to live . . . the North Pole every winter, the South Pole every summer."

**40
2437**

In case you haven't guessed, the numbers above do not refer to U. S. highways—unless they happen to be highways that lead to Las Vegas. In that case, follow them and you'll then be able to see one of the bright new stars at the Dunes Hotel. She's Yashi Muneko, Japanese beauty queen (a 40-24-37 beauty) of Minsky's Follies International. Though this is her first appearance on the Mainland, Yashi has appeared in Hawaii; has modeled in Japan; and was Miss Tokyo in a 1957 beauty contest. She is enjoying her stay in the United States, but she wants to return to Japan someday to marry. In the meantime? "Well," she says, "if a motion picture company would offer me a job, I would consider it . . ."









"Who'd ever have thought that my running a red light would lead to this?"

The Bitter Wood (Continued from page 4)

was filled with a great sense of completeness . . .

His train was due in two hours. They had had those two hours and walked aimlessly up and down the boards of the small station. He had been enthusiastic.

"You'll see," he said eagerly. "There's so much to learn—there's proper rotation, irrigation, new seeding, new machinery. I'll be able to double the yield—Ellen, it will mean so much to us—"

"I'm sure," she said quietly.

They walked on the creaking boards in the midday sun and somewhere a train was pounding toward their valley.

"You don't mind?" He said it because, even after all they had talked, he felt her doubt. "You won't mind going back to the mountain?"

"I won't mind," she said.

"It will be better—safer," he said angrily. "Two years is a long time . . ."

"Yes," Ellen said.

"If I have the money I'll be home in the winter."

"Yes, Luther," she said.

"I must go," he said. "I've always planned on going—"

She turned to him and caught his arms.

"Of course, Luther," she smiled at him. "I'll stay with Daddy and I'll be a farm girl again. I'll hide from men on the mountain. I won't be happy but I'll wait for you on the mountain—"

She was laughing at him but he didn't care. They held each other on the station boards, and his train called distantly to them from the depth of the valley.

* * *

The sun beat down on the thicket, dried out the time images until they faded in the heat. The rifle barrel was hot in his hand. A crow cawed from a high perch, and Ben was coming.

He saw Ben working up the trail. Axe on shoulder, quiet Ben coming up the path. A hundred yards—Luther bent to his sights, waited while Ben passed abeam of him. The sight centered on the dark shirted back. His finger came gently back to the trigger.

He knew in the moment he couldn't do it that way. He'd kill Ben, but it wouldn't be with a bullet in the back. It wouldn't be a man with an axe unknowing his death.

He pulled his trigger. The shot slammed in the silence of the mountain. The axehead kicked from Ben's shoulder. Ben stood stone still, knowing the next one would be close behind the first, knowing he was in gunsights and lost.

"Go get your gun, Ben!" Luther

stood, shouted across the distance, his voice ringing down the mountain. "I'll be back today, Ben—go get your gun."

Ben picked up his axe, went slowly up the path.

It was a faint trail that Luther took up the mountain. Deep into the brush he went, higher on the dirt path that had been known only to him and one other. He came breathing hard to the shelf and pushed through the tall grass that shielded the flat piece near the summit of the mountain.

He lay back against the boulders and looked to the valley spread in the depth, at the hills beyond the valley. It was a strange thing for him to be sitting on the flat alone, to be looking at the valley alone. It was a thing he hadn't done before. She had been beside him before—Ellen sharing the sight and the emotion.

He was sick with loneliness and love for her.

She came quietly over the lip of the hill. As if in answer to his longing, Ellen came up through the grass, and the sun ran rippled shadows over the familiar braided hair, shimmered on the hazel eyes. Luther went up to her with long steps, grasped her within the embrace of his big hands. But there was no response from the flesh he held. There was no response on the face he had drawn close to him.

He put his hands down.

"Ben sent you," he said bitterly. "Ben sent you to speak for him—"

She shook her head, her eyes trying to see past his bitterness.

"Then why have you come?" he called strongly with his hope.

"Ben won't take gun to a man," she said. "Ben won't come—"

"Then tell him I'll come the full way," Luther said hoarsely.

"You can't make a claim on love, Luther," she said gently. "You can't claim anything in a human heart that isn't given freely."

"What was the reason of it?" he asked her. "For what was the planning, the waiting?"

"It was the waiting, Luther. It was your waiting that brought us to this," the girl said. "I didn't ask to come back to the mountain—"

"To Ben?"

"What did I know of Ben?" she smiled without laughter. "It was an accidental thing—"

"But, how—how?" he demanded. "I've asked myself a thousand times, how—when we were so close to each other?"

"I don't know—" she hesitated, "perhaps, at first, because he was gentle and reminded me of you—"

He laughed harshly.

"Yes," she persisted, "he was gentle, as you were to me—and the rest I don't know. There are no reasons, no explaining . . ."

"Ellen, I need you. Above all else I need you—" he pleaded suddenly. He had sworn he would not come to begging, but now he begged without shame as he saw the loss approach him.

"Oh, Luther, there are so many girls who look to you in the valley—"

The dust blew dry up the mountain, burned at his face, fanned the fire inside him.

It was all over. Luther sat back against the boulder, knowing it was over between them. It might have been something he should have known before, but it could not be believed until he had heard her say it.

He sat watching the haze roll over the valley. He had come to get Ellen back. He'd kill Ben and get Ellen back—that was what he had thought. But now he knew he'd never get her back, there was nothing left to be gotten back. He had been irrevocably cheated. He looked at the free, half-hidden swell of her breasts and felt the hatred surge inside him until it coursed like passion through his blood.

He reached out to her wrist, held tightly.

"I will not give you up untouched—" he said.

Ellen pulled away from him, but he held and followed.

"No, Luther—no . . ." she whispered frantically.

But he forced her back against the tall grass, down into it. He tore at her clothing, then at his own.

As immediately as the fire passed from him, he realized how she had received him, without response, without resistance. He looked at her close, dazed face, saw in it a multitude of things and among these was pity. He put his face into the softness of her neck and wept, his shoulders shaking. Her hand touched his head, and the movement was the recollection of a caress.

"Ah, Luther," she whispered, "that was not the way it was supposed to be . . . the way we thought it. That was not the way, was it, Luther?"

He ran down the feverish mountain. He ran with the wind hot to his face, with the gunstock hot in his hand. He came to the fork, the Holden place trail, and fled past it down the mountainside. And then there was Macklin blocking the path with his rifle.

"You muffed it," the mountain man gestured bitterly with his gun.

"I'm through here—" Luther pushed past him.

(Continued on page 38)



Nothing starts the day better, say the French

By George Manchener

AFTER SUCCESSFULLY beating back the quick-lunch counter, wax-filled chocolate, and Coca-Cola last winter, France's fifty million got ready to struggle with the most ominous and serious American invasion of them all. The invasion threatened a favorite national custom—sex before breakfast.

French tourists have long avoided the United States because most have felt the New World is still largely uncivilized. Not that they think Indians still roam the West nor that gangsters are roaming Chicago and New York, but they've heard the Americans have a dismal habit—sex after supper.

There really wasn't much cause for alarm as long as the Atlantic Ocean kept crazy American ideas at a distance and as long as Americans kept themselves busy firing rockets. But then a Wisconsin heart specialist shot up a rocket that skipped the ocean and hit France at its tenderest parts.

Dr. William S. Dock, in a speech aimed at a heart health convention in the U. S. Midwest, but widely quoted throughout France, warned that most heart attacks occurring during work hours were brought on not by work but by pre-work activities.

The doctor accused sexual intercourse as the worst offender.

Most Americans ignored Doc Dock's wagging finger as not being aimed at them, but the French were thrown into alternating cycles of anxiety, fear, despair and indignation. The French believe vehemently in love by dawn's early light—Nothing starts the day better, they argue. It brightens the morning, makes the world sing. Pierre can slip into his grease-stained smock and face his job in the garage no matter how many cranks

he has to handle during the day. Jeannette cleans house, fights with the fishman, the wine man, the cheese man and still has enough good mood left over to put flowers on the table for Pierre's supper. Pierre comes home tired and dirty but without fearing Jeannette is waiting to pounce on him in the doorway. At night when he says he's tired Jeannette doesn't accuse him of having an afternoon girl friend. Even if he did, she's not too unhappy because she knows *she came first*.

There is no doubt in the ordinary Frenchman's mind that the world is a better place to live in and that life is indeed more tolerable because of A.M. love.

Americans tend to disagree with the French. One U. S. writer, commenting on Dock's thundering warning, said, "Birdcage mouth, death breath and green fur on the teeth in the early morning hours before breakfast make most Americans think of the bathroom sink rather than love-making. There are some, of course, who try to beat morning mouth by throwing gargle into their throats, smearing toothpaste on their teeth and gums and chewing chlorophyll tablets, but these unesthetic mouth masks make the whole thing a stagey, artificial production. Give me the night anytime."

The everyday business of life prevents most people from fixing their own best hours for romance, just as sleeping itself is regulated by economic conditions. Of course, there are always the sex athletes, marathon lovers, gigolos, sailor, cowboys and newlyweds who always manage to find odd moments in the day to make love.

But the average, nine-to-five man, aside from weekends and vacations, is pinned down to either night or morning or to both. One labor union leader had no com-

ment to make when he was asked whether his unions would fight for paid love time in the day after all other benefits were provided for. But other union leaders felt Doc Dock's speech was management inspired. "Management is trying to dodge compensation payments. They're using Dock to pave the way for court cases. Hereafter, when we try to collect compensation for a man who has a heart attack while he's driving his truck or pulling out a file drawer, we're going to have to prove that the man didn't have sexual intercourse with his wife before leaving for work in the morning."

Impartial labor-management observers are inclined to agree with this last opinion. In his talk before the Wisconsin Heart Association, Dr. Dock pointed out that mild on-job stresses were often blamed for heart disorders, when actually certain off-job stresses were guilty.

The really significant point of his report is summed up in the following statement: "From the histories of patients with angina or severe dyspnea I have concluded that . . . of off-the-job stresses, sexual activity is the main factor in young and middle-aged women, and equals all other causes in men."

"Pulse rate is nearly doubled," Dock warned, describing the effects of coitus on the heart. "Cardiac output per beat is increased nearly fifty per cent, and systolic pressure rises about thirty per cent even in orgasms induced by masturbation, with minimal emotional or physical stress. This circulatory effect is comparable to that caused by running up two to three flights of stairs, while in intercourse the effect may be two or three times more severe or prolonged."

Some of the most primitive and superstitious reasons imaginable are dragged out to support either night or day love. The Masai tribe of Africa, for example, argue for coition at night. They believe that if a man has sexual intercourse during the day his blood will empty into the womb of the woman and he will have nothing but water left in his veins. On the other hand, the Chenchu people, another retarded land group, believe that children conceived during night-time intercourse will be born blind.

According to strict zoological law, man should carry out his sexual functions in bright, broad daylight. He is badly equipped for getting around and finding his food in darkness, as is clearly evident when the light bulb in the refrigerator burns out. Other animals, handicapped like man by poor night vision, use night strictly for sleep. Owls copulate at night. Apes, gorillas, monkeys, orangutans, pigeons, chickens, lizards and trout grub around for food and women during the day. What gives man an advantage is electricity and the candle. "Though man is a daytime forager," anthropologist Clellan Ford says, "man has developed sources of artificial illumination which permit him to establish nocturnal behavior patterns."

When Alfred Kinsey gave 798 men a chance to vote between sex in the dark and sex in the light, only twenty one per cent lifted their uninhibited hands for light; nineteen per cent admitted they liked some light; thirty five per cent said they wanted darkness and twenty five per cent shrugged their shoulders. Kinsey interviewed 2,042 women on the same subject and found fifty five per cent voting for total blackout, nineteen per cent voting for light and twenty six per cent either didn't know or didn't care whether the lights were on or off.

Nobody needed Kinsey to know that a woman must believe she's attractive before she can engage in successful love-making. Raw morning light shows some

women at their worst: the pocks and pits in her skin, the hair on her face, washed out, pale eyes and shiny nose. A man can take these defects in stride when he's hungry enough, but for romance-minded women the harsh light is an intruder. It exposes her puffy, blood-shot eyes, her lips dry and cracked, her hair in a tangle. It isn't kind to her man, either. In the darkness she could dream he was a hero but morning shows him up for what he is—skinny, hairy-armed, unshaven.

A partial explanation for the interest in night-time intercourse—excepting the French taste—is that our first sex contacts were usually watched by critical adults or were forbidden and punished. Our peepings and touchings had to be sneaked. The best hiding place, before we were old enough to get car keys, was darkness itself. At the same time, censorship laws helped create an attitude of shame toward public daylight sexual activity. Anthropologists say a second general attitude was also effected: the feeling that *darkness and sex play go together*. Thus, for some people, darkness has strong stimulating values. The light switch is like a trigger; pull it and they get romantic. As the ancient, classic-age man about town, Ovid, wrote: "The dark makes every woman beautiful. The maximum desirable light is furnished free of charge by nature herself—the moon."

It's well known that women are more easily distracted during coition than men. Tests involving animals show this easily and definitely. Crumbs of cheese dropped near a pair of copulating rats distracted the female rat, who wanted to eat, but not the male, who wanted to keep copulating. In another test a mouse was trotted out in front of a pair of copulating cats. The female cat was all for taking after the mouse but the male cat didn't appear to see it or smell it.

Women are usually nervous cats in the morning, harassed by countless tensions. The least wrong sound can destroy her love-making mood. She wonders if the shades are up and the neighbors are watching. She's worried about the kids bursting into the room. She complains about the noise out on the street. Milk is being delivered and newsboys thump their papers on the porch. Next door or upstairs a radio blares out the time every three minutes. Work, school and another day are waiting for her attention. It's no wonder that when her husband starts acting like a man she feels like using judo to get rid of him.

Night, on the other hand, smothers all the enemies of love-making: work, worries, noises. The woman feels she has all the time she needs and therefore she relaxes. If she wants light, she can provide it by turning on a lamp. Modern lighting is actually a cosmetic in that by the use of colored bulbs she can veil her figure in exotic, tempting shades. She can use pink bulbs to make herself look ripe and young; blue light can make her look mysterious; green light can create illusions of oriental rites and a red bulb can make even the puniest man look savage.

Best of all is the sleep that follows sexual intercourse. Every taut, stretched muscle fiber in the body relaxes. The mind itself is affected and relaxes too.

City air pollution engineers say that night air is usually the cleanest air we can breathe. By ten o'clock breezes have swept industrial gases out of the air over the city. Morning air, on the other hand, starts choking up early with gasoline exhaust. In the California smog belt, ozone chokes and blinds thousands of citizens. Residents there complain of being stung, burned, stifled and dirtied by smog, but it's strange that none of them have complained about its ef- (Continued on page 38)



PARTY BOAT

He hadn't seen everything

By Delmas W. Abbott

ELMO SPRAWLED on a bench in Casey Square, one arm hung loosely over the side of the bench, his abdomen distended with the beer of many boilermakers. He knew vaguely that he was on the verge of passing out. Traffic on Rotterdam and Broadway hummed, and the sound clung faintly to his fleeing consciousness. He had done it early tonight.

A failure on his job, he had needed to find some other way to prove to himself that he was a man, and he had chosen to do it by demonstrating his capacity to guzzle beer. But that was not enough. Even in his alcoholic haze he knew he had failed again. Maybe he ought to find a woman tonight to prove his manhood. Then maybe he ought to start on a job-hunt again. His money wouldn't last much longer. A woman . . . if he wasn't too damn drunk to . . .

Suddenly that was what he wanted more than anything else—a woman. It was what he had been wanting and needing a long time. He would. . . . He tried to get up. His hand slipped, and he fell back onto the bench, deadweight heavy, face downward, his well-made, slightly-built body sprawling. His thick black hair hung moist over his forehead reflecting glints of light from the street lamp. His head swam. But he would . . . or was he too drunk . . .

A heavy hand gave his shoulder three rough jerks. He blinked at the hand—like five fat and hairy frankfurters. He saw two black shoes on the walk, and his eyes slowly climbed blue worsted legs, past a black

leather belt, up a tweed jacket to a fat face that was florid and hard under a gray felt hat.

"Get up," the florid face said.

He rose slowly amid a harshening hum of the Rotterdam-Broadway traffic that now seemed to thrum instead of hum. He clung to the back of the bench. The frankfurter fingers tugged at his arm.

"I'm taking you in. Get moving. Over there to that car." The man pointed to an unmarked black car at the curb.

"Wha-th-hell's-this?" Elmo asked.

The frankfurter fingers jerked a small leather case from an inside coat pocket and opened it for a quick moment on some sort of shiny badge. At the same instant Elmo glimpsed a black leather holster under the big man's fat left arm.

Elmo staggered to the curb and got into the front seat with the big man. The car swung into the traffic and turned down Blanton Street toward Cherokee Park.

"What's your name?"

"Elmo Lewis." He must try to be sober—act sober for this plain-clothes cop. His head bobbed, and he jerked it up.

"Where do you live?"

"Seventy-Fourth. Near . . . near Riverside."

"You want to spend the night in jail?"

"No."

"Well, you're going to. Until you sober up. Where do you work?"



ILLUSTRATED BY ELZIA P. MOON

"Got fired last week. Was a reporter on the *Evening Sun*."

"Why'd you get fired?"

"Wanted to be . . . be a crime reporter 'stead of . . . 'stead of doing rewrites. And I started . . . started drinking too much."

"How old are you?"

"Twenty-eight."

"You broke?"

"No."

The car wheeled into Cherokee Park among trees that glowed with spotty autumn color in the bright spheres of street lights. The plain-clothes man opened the vent windows and drove several interwoven miles in silence, never leaving the park. The air was cold on Elmo's face. He was not going to pass out now.

Under a street light he looked at his apprehender and wondered why the hell he didn't go on to a precinct station. The man's face was as hard as the street pavement, but something seemed vaguely wrong with it—maybe because the eyelashes were as long as an actress' false lashes, and the eyes themselves were the one weakness of the face, watery, vague like faded blue denim.

"You sobering in this air?"

"I wasn't-so-drunk. I'm freezing now. My face was sweaty, and it's drying."

"You look like a good man. Strong. Virile. You don't really want to go to jail, do you?"

Elmo wondered if this was the beginning of a shake-

down, a pay-off. The man had already asked him if he was broke. "No. I said I didn't. And . . . and I said I had some money." He began to fumble at his hip pocket.

"No. Not that. Put it back." The man laughed. "Maybe I'll just take you some place else—to my boat maybe. I mean one a guy lets me use for parties. But you better cooperate." The frankfurter fingers gripped Elmo's arm roughly. "If you don't, I'll jug you. I'm just going to let you have some fun. It's a fine boat. A Grebe sixty-five. You cooperate, we have us a party, then you go on your way."

The man eased the grip on Elmo's arm, and Elmo stared at him. He didn't look like a queer, but those damned weak eyes with long lashes could presage some inherent quirk.

"Maybe you better just take me to jail," Elmo said, sobering a bit more.

"Not yet. And you better cooperate. Take that as a warning and there'll be no argument." The big man pushed back his coat and shifted the holster under his arm.

At the Cherokee Park Inn, the car left the park and finally stopped down by the yacht basin on the Cobb River. The watermelon smell of dirty sea water, pushed upcurrent by the incoming tide, penetrated Elmo's nostrils with the pungency of cigar smoke.

The man parked the car on the quay and led Elmo out on the peripheral finger pier of the basin to the most remote slip, where a white and brown Grebe 65'

rocked and tugged gently at its mooring lines. A high pier light struck sparks on the arms of two canvas-bottomed metal chairs in the after cockpit of the Grebe. Elmo took a few steps back that way on the walk-around deck while the big man unlocked a door.

Far out on the river a tug chugged and pushed foam upriver. The basin was quiet except for boisterous party noises coming from a boat moored far over on the opposite pier. Lights glared from saloon to sundeck.

"Come on," the man said in an almost gleeful tone. "The crew's ashore. Nobody's here but you and me."

Almost sober now and with his hand on the deck rail, Elmo turned and entered the saloon with curious misgivings. What was this character really up to? And how did a plain-clothes cop on duty have access to a splendid craft like this sixty-five-footer?

Elmo said to the man, "I was in the Navy for a hitch. The draft. I took the Navy. I know something about boats. Job like this would cost fifty to seventy-five thousand dollars."

"Maybe. More or less."

"How would you . . . ?"

The man switched on a light in the saloon. "Come on. Down here," he said.

As Elmo walked through a beautiful saloon, he was aware of a long red leather couch and red leather arm chairs around a large cocktail table. But he was most consciously aware of two pictures on the bulkhead just as he stepped down past a small galley into a forward stateroom. The pictures were the *Mona Lisa* and a muscular nude man hanging side by side.

On each side of the stateroom were bunks covered with myrtle-green spreads. Above them were tiny portholes no bigger than salad plates. And there was a built-in couch aft of one bunk. It, too, was green, green leather. A door opened into a small head.

The fat man pointed to the couch. "Take off all your clothes while I make some black coffee," he said.

"Now look here. You may be a cop, but I don't have to . . ."

"Remember, I said no argument. And I'm not going to touch you, if that's what you're thinking." He pointed to Elmo's trousers. "Just get them off. Everything."

"I'll be goddamned!" Elmo spread his legs and stood defiantly.

The man took his revolver from its holster. "I said get your clothes off."

Reluctantly, Elmo began to peel, and the man went to make coffee.

Elmo stripped slowly and put his clothes on the green couch; then he stood, legs apart, facing the big man, who had returned now with eyes

watery, staring through long lashes.

He grinned for a moment; then he said, "You'll do all right. You might as well lie down a while now. Then drink some coffee and build up your strength. I'll be back shortly."

He picked up Elmo's clothes and locked them in a drawer under one of the bunks; then he left the stateroom and locked the door to the saloon.

Elmo went quickly to the head. He got rid of his beer and stepped under the shower. Boy, I've sure seen everything now, he thought, and I don't know what the hell else I'm going to see. What's this character up to?

Was the man a cop? Only a drunk fool such as he, Elmo, could get himself involved in such a situation with such a character. No wonder he always failed at things—even at finding that woman he had wanted tonight.

Elmo dried himself and felt still more sobered. He wished he had another drink, but he couldn't get to the saloon to look for liquor. He could get to the galley, however. He poured a cup of the coffee the man had made and sipped it. Then he examined the little portholes. There was nothing but the dark river beyond the outer pier on one side and a darkened Wheeler Promenade 52' three slips away on the other side. The windows were not locked, but he could never get more than one leg through any one of them.

He looked in drawers, thinking he might find another gun or some clothes overlooked there, but he found nothing. Not even a robe. He would just have to remain as naked as that fellow beside *Mona Lisa*. And wait.

He sat one one of the bunks and lay back on the green pillow. His head still swam a little hangoverishly, whirling him in a gentle eddy with the slow rocking of the Grebe. He went to sleep.

He was awakened by a hand shaking him. It was the same big hairy hand with the frankfurter fingers. Quickly, he pulled the green cover over him, for a girl, standing beside the florid-faced big man, was looking at him.

The man stepped to the couch at the foot of the bunk, removed his coat, and threw it on the other bunk; then he shifted his holster and sat down.

Elmo looked at the girl, a slim young woman with a generous bosom that excited him and held his eyes, as some other undefined magnetism within her seemed to attract and bring alive some latent, maybe momentarily lost, manhood within himself. She was not very tall, and she had wide, strong hips. Her face was pretty, with a kind of childish beauty. Except for her eyes. Like the big man's, her eyes were the weakness of her face. They were insipid and ice green. The girl wore a

good tweed suit with a pencil-thin green line check. It fit noticeably tight over her hips and breasts.

"What are you waiting for?" the big man asked the girl a bit irritably.

The girl began to undress. She did so slowly, looking at Elmo all the time. She never smiled, but there was a hint of both mirth and a little maliciousness about her expression. For a moment she stood naked beside the bed.

Elmo had never seen anyone quite like her, and she had brought a scent of roses into the room. She looked toward the man, whose hands moved nervously in his lap now, his eyes wide and extremely watery, the long lashes batting frequently. Little beads of sweat were rising on his upper lip. "Go on. Go on," he said to the girl.

And strangely, Elmo felt that he was in a scene he had enacted before, at least one he had witnessed—or read. *Sanctuary!* William Faulkner's *Sanctuary*. That was it. He wondered if these characters had read that book.

The girl got into the bunk and pulled the cover away from Elmo. The big man, his florid face changing to red-purple, arose to stand at the foot of the bunk, his lips tight and his eyes tear-wet. Elmo felt a tingle in his own titillated body, and his skin crimsoned. He realized now that he had not seen everything.

All the time, the big man's hands kept gripping the mattress end, causing the bunk to quiver beneath Elmo and the girl.

Later, the man gave Elmo his clothes and told him to dress. The girl dressed, too. She had not said a word to Elmo. Nor had he said anything to her. Yet there had been complete communication between them. Ironically amused, Elmo thought of an expression: silent semantics.

The man took them in the black car and drove back to Cherokee Park. Near the Cherokee Park Inn he told Elmo to get out. "And keep your mouth shut. I could still take you in." He showed Elmo the badge in the leather case again.

"You could what?" Elmo asked with astonishment. The character was still putting on the sleuth act.

"You heard me. Who'd believe the word of a lush against mine? I'll see you again some time. I've got your address, remember?" He drove away taking the girl with him.

And I wanted to be a crime reporter, Elmo thought. If I wrote this story, like the man said, nobody would believe it. I'd just be taken for a hallucinating lush.

He laughed suddenly. But I had fun, he thought. I had my woman and didn't

(Continued on page 20)

YOU THINK *THIS* IS NUDE ?





...WELL, IT'S NOT!

Las Vegas show girl Sunny Small, shown in the color photograph on the previous page, is putting up a beautiful—but phony—front. She's wearing an invention called a "Treasure Chest," a sensational idea of choreographer Barry Ashton. Ashton recently found himself in the middle of a controversy over how much nudity should be shown in a new show at Las Vegas' Flamingo. "Treasure Chest" is his solution to the problem. The life-like molds themselves were made by Rene Zendyar, an artist. His work is so good, says Ashton, that "even to the naked eye you can't tell if she is . . . or isn't . . ." Once Ashton had the Treasure Chests he asked Hollywood designer Lloyd Lamber to work out some costumes for the show, using the false fronts as the main theme.

What happened, of course, is that the whole town flocked to the Flamingo to see the non-nude chorus line that looked more nude than any of the other chorus lines in town. The show's amazing finale comes when the girls with perfect busts reveal their secret. Ashton's idea has been so successful that he's formed the Bar Ash Corporation to market his invention. On the right, Ashton and Zendyar introduce Sunny Small to the Treasure Chest which now shares closet space (below) with her other costumes. This Flamingo show is Sunny's second appearance in Las Vegas. She made her night club debut in the resort town a few years ago at the El Rancho Vegas, followed by some movie work in Hollywood. Naturally enough, she has the kind of show-girl figure that needs no phony fronts. Well, look at Sunny in the bathtub—below, right. The hair, of course, is phony; Sunny's wearing a black wig. And the rest? Guess again! It's her Flamingo Treasure Chest.

PHOTOGRAPHED BY DOROTHY GUNN



even have to look for her. Or pay anything.

He wondered who the girl was and why she had let herself be involved in a situation like that. She intrigued him, and he actually had been compulsively attracted to her when, after a time, he had been able to forget the presence of the drooling and ogling man at the foot of the bunk. Was she like that man, off her rocker a little?

Elmo felt excitement rising within himself once more, a new and lively interest, ambition. He had behaved like a man under odds like that—hungover, a gun at his back, and in bed with a strange and silent woman. He wanted to see that girl again in the privacy of some other room. He started walking swiftly, sober, across the park, back toward the Casey Square.

Three days later, Elmo was in a pub on Rotterdam, and the girl came in. She sat at the bar near the door, several stools away from him. Her eyes roved the mirror behind the bottles, pausing for a moment on each reflected male face, then moving on. Her eyes stopped on Elmo's face for a second, stared, and moved on, showing no recognition.

After a while she smiled at a handsome young face in the mirror, but the face ignored her smile.

When there was an empty stool beside her, Elmo moved to it. "Hello. May I buy you a drink?" he asked.

"If you like," she said, still searching the faces in the mirror.

"What are you drinking?"

"Bourbon on the rocks."

"No soda?"

"No."

He ordered the drink and looked at her in the mirror for better perspective. "What's your name? We've never been introduced—verbally." He smiled. "Mine's Elmo Lewis," he added.

"Vera," she said.

"Just Vera?"

"That's enough. At least you won't have to say, 'Hey you!'"

He turned and looked directly at her then, lowering his eyes to the blue blouse she wore under the same tweed jacket she had worn the other night. Her eyes followed his to the blouse. She sat up straight and tugged at its plunging neckline, smiling a little as she did so, and he realized that her eyes were not as insipidly ice-green as he had thought they were.

"Like this material?" she asked, still tugging at the blouse. Then she sloshed her bourbon over the ice cubes.

"Most exciting material I ever saw. Exclusive model, no doubt. I've never seen an exact copy anywhere, and I've

examined a lot of material," he said. She sipped her drink.

"Was he your husband?" Elmo asked.

"Who?"

"You know who. That character."

"You mean Gerald? No."

"Gerald? What a name for that big slob. Suits him fine though. You related to him? Excuse me if I'm insulting you."

"No." She smiled.

"Then why in the hell . . . ?"

"Business."

"Business? What business?"

"You guess." Her eyes were on the face of a sailor in the bar mirror. The sailor winked, and she smiled.

"I see," Elmo said. "But with him . . . with me like that. It was sure a queer kind of business. Do you do it often?"

"For him, once, twice a year maybe. Whenever he swoops in for a sort of commando raid on the town. His kind of raid. Gets his kicks that way. Then moves on in that boat of his to other towns up the river and down the sea coast. He's got plenty of dough."

"That badge and gun. Why does he use them? Money would be just as lethal. And that car. He can't haul a car around on that boat."

"When he ties up down there at the basin he rents the car to cruise in. The badge is a fake, if you look at it closely, but the gun's real enough, and I don't think he'd hesitate to use it, if somebody tried to foul him up. He pulls the plain-clothes act because that's part of his kicks. Like he thinks he's forcing the guys to play the lover boy in his production."

"Why don't the real cops . . . ?"

"He's safe enough usually. With that commando technique. Herc, swoosh, gone in a few days. What girl's going to turn him in? He pays me plenty. Me and the ones he's got lined up in other towns. And the guys he finds are usually drunk. Sometimes bums. And they all have enough fun not to give a damn about the gun and badge stunt. What about you yourself? Did you tell the cops?" She smiled at Elmo.

"I see what you mean. Is he still here?"

"I think so. I saw him last night."

"Why doesn't he just hire some guy, keep him with him, not go through that cruising bit all the time? He must have plenty of money to run a boat like that Grebe. I'd be available when you're concerned." He smiled.

Vera ignored the smile and the availability crack. "Like I said. It's part of his kicks to feel like he's forcing the guys. He's got a couple of men on the boat with him. One's a sort of cook and valet, part-time seaman. The other one

knows everything about boats and how to run them. He does, too. He met these guys in the Navy during the war. They were all on an LST together in the Pacific. I met him one night in here. We got drunk, and he took me down to his boat and made me a deal."

"Does Gerald ever . . . does he ever get into the act himself?"

"Him?" She laughed. "He just looks like a man now. A piece of shrapnel bulls-eyed his manhood during an LST landing in the Pacific. He's tough and mean, though. And kind as hell when he wants to be. But I sure wouldn't want to cross him. He keeps that gun loaded." She smiled at the sailor in the mirror, and the sailor pointed to an empty stool beside himself. She kept on smiling, but she did not move.

Elmo eyed her blouse and decided he'd better make his pitch before somebody like that sailor moved in. "How about you and me shoving off from here? Let's go somewhere and make some etchings."

"No," she said quickly with a tone of regret in her voice. She frowned at him in the mirror.

"Why the hell not? I thought we did all right the other night in spite of . . ."

"Yes, but no." She looked again at the sailor and smiled.

"What do you see in that sailor? If it's bucks, I'm not broke. This one won't be on Gerald."

"It's still no."

"Because of the way it was the other night? Because of that . . . because of Gerald?"

"Yes. I never do . . . but I like you. I told you he was tough, and I've got a good deal with him, good money. I don't want to lose it. He doesn't like offstage encores to any act he produces. He made me promise. He doesn't like for me to have anything to do later with the guys he brings to the boat. It's a part of his kicks. Unexpected one-night stands for the guys."

"How would he know?"

"I'd know. And I stick to a good bargain. A good deal. I'm in my business for money, not my health."

She finished her drink and got up suddenly. "Good-night," she said, tugging again at her blouse; then she went to the stool beside the sailor.

Elmo ordered another drink and sat on the stool staring at her in the mirror. He felt like he had just been jilted. He was again a failure. Maybe he was not the man he thought he was the other night. But he would not give up. He wanted her. He knew what she was, but he wanted her.

In a little while Vera left with the
(Continued on page 64)



"Don't be silly, Daddy. I'm old enough to wear a strapless gown."



A glimpse of Hell

"By GAWD, would ye look at that bloody idiot," an astonished Australian near me said. "'E's gonna wade right in the bloomin fire, 'e is!"

"'E'll never make it," his companion said.

"He may be right," I thought as I stood baking at the edge of a twenty-five-foot oven of glowing hot coals. On the opposite side of the pit, facing me, stood a barefoot Hindu dressed in a coarse yellow garment with a large brass urn balanced on his head. He seemed in a state of mounting hysteria, egged on by the crescendo of cacophonous drums and cymbals blocking his retreat. His fevered, blood-shot eyes darted around as though urgently seeking an escape; spittle ran off his lower lip and his nostrils were distended as if he were forcing the last gasps of air painfully through his lungs. When, at last, he raised his right foot from the ground, a whimper passed through his mouth; the foot moved forward in slow motion and finally came down firmly into the fire. There seemed to be a moment of suspended animation made more grotesque by the appearance of his figure shimmering through heat waves. Small flames licked around the sole of his foot and puffs of smoke rose to meet the second on its downward path. One step . . . two . . . three . . . four, eyes widened . . . five . . . six, a look of disbelief . . . seven, the crowd moaned as, smelling scorched, he stepped on the ground next to me.

When my sister, Jini, and I came to the Fiji Islands to witness firewalking, we never dreamed we'd become so emotionally involved by the experience. We had taken a South Seas cruise on a Matson luxury liner where we were waited on hand and foot in the air-conditioned haven of pseudo-millionaires, having a wonderful time. Then, abruptly, we found ourselves at our destination, a land where even the rich were poor and unsmiling. As the boat sailed away we sat in the Garrick Hotel, trapped, in our hot, dirty, smelly room, strategically located between the Fijian Bar and the men's room. The trauma of the following days properly conditioned us for the episode which began with the religious ceremonies the day before the actual firewalking.

The day had been too long, too hot and too dry; the air was fetid with stale rice and curry. Jini and I had wandered the streets of Suva trying to kill the day that was dead before we started. We hadn't slept well, unaccustomed as we were to the night noises of howling, wild dog packs, screeching bats and sleepless roosters. The mosquitoes were hell in spite of the nets suspended over our stingy cots. And this, the day we had long awaited, seemed to hang under a torpid sun refusing to give up the ghost. However, interminable hours of discussing the local water-shortage, while longing for a bath, and our incredulity at Mr. Garnets' flying octopus, brought us up to a time when we could begin to gather our accoutrements for the night's outing.

When we arrived at an out of the way place by means of an antique omnibus of dubious reliability, a bit dazed and bruised, we were told that we had a short four mile hike ahead of us.

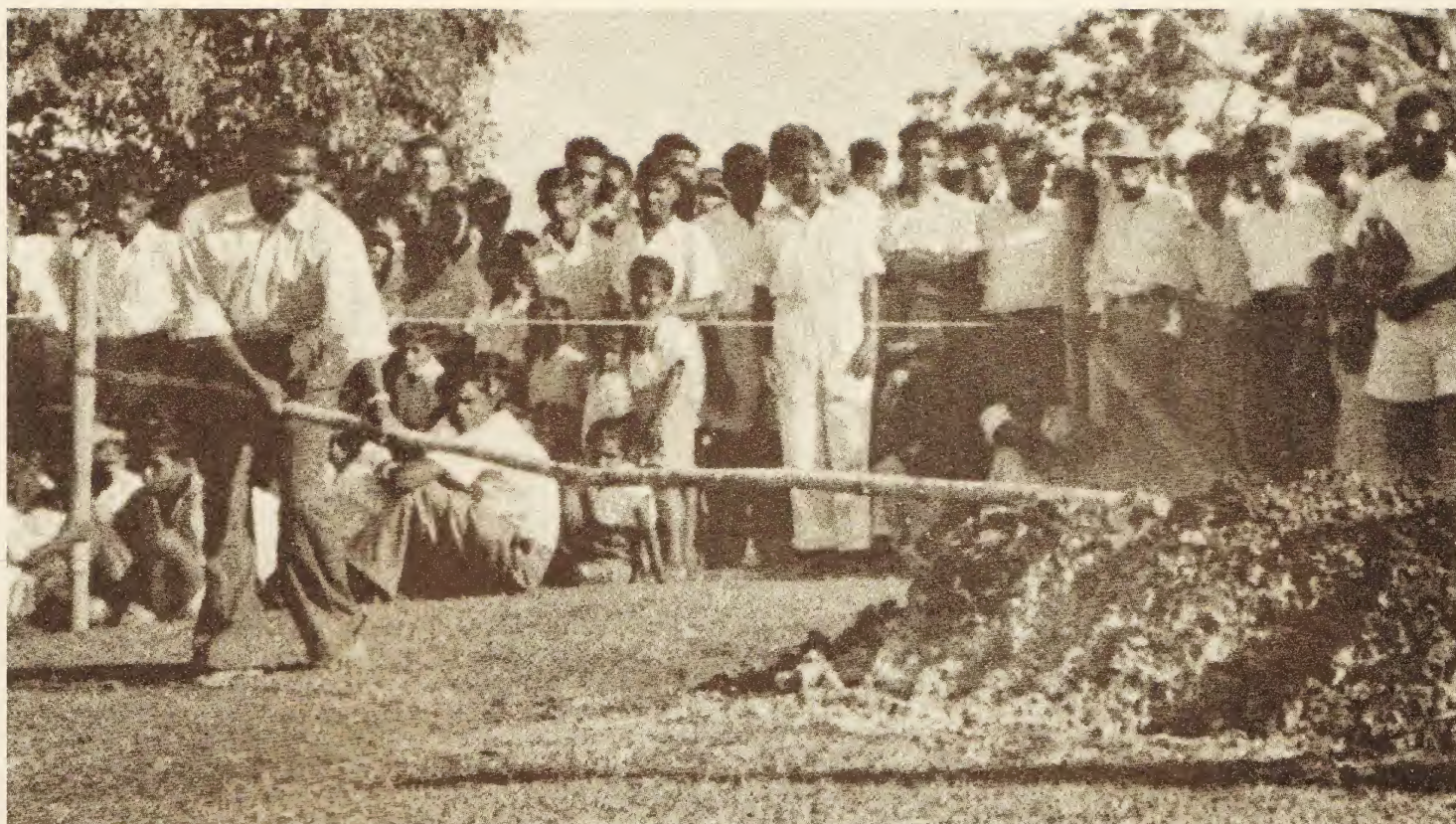
The problem of maneuvering my heavy gear through the bush, while negotiating a treacherous footpath, sporadically lighted by a lonely moon, kept me so preoccupied that I'm afraid I neglected chaperoning my sister, leaving her to her own resources, as it were, and any helping hands that might be protruding from the scenery. The end of the journey delivered me to the Maha Devi Temple and my introduction to the art of worship and purification necessary to perambulate hell-fire and brimstone, thus captivating my curiosity to such a degree that I was as oblivious of my sister's whereabouts as I would have been of a "Kick Me" sign pinned to the tail of my serape.

My astonishment when confronted with the Maha Devi Temple might be likened to that of a young girl who is promised the moon but receives only a piece of green cheese; for instead of a golden edifice penetrating the black ceiling of night, I encountered a gaudy yellow structure reminiscent of a pristine out-house. Nevertheless, the title was effective enough to create the illusionary stature in the minds of the spectators and participants alike.

Since the Sacred Cow religion of the Hindu considers it sacrilegious to bring leather within a hallowed area, I therefore stripped myself of shoes, belt and camera cases before entering the roped-off enclosure adjacent to the temple. I hastened across damp grass to peer in the small window at the side. Against the rear wall was erected an elaborate, multicolored, tinseled altar topped with dozens of green metal parrots; seated before the facade were two papier maché goddesses whose multiple arms of omnipotence overlapped from lack of space. One god-

PHOTOGRAPHED BY THE AUTHOR
AND JINI DELLACCIO

By Paul Duckworth



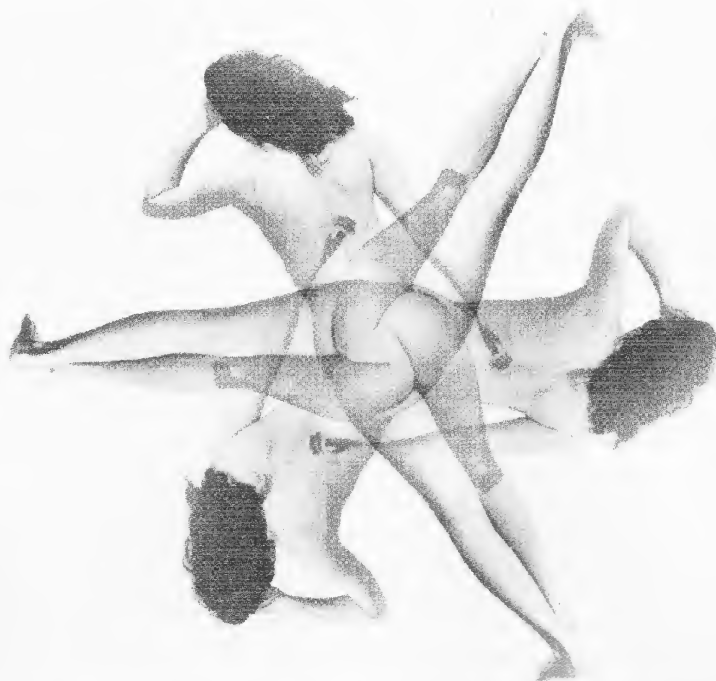
dess, Kali, was painted black, her bright red tongue extended in the attitude of a demented child; while her white sister-goddess, Mariam-mam, glared tight-lipped toward the door as though she found it quite distasteful to share the same crowded bench with that black idiot pushing for prime position. Both idols were adorned with countless strings of yellow flowers and a miscellany of trinkets. In the narrow passage inside the door hovered the skeletal figure of a high priest,

brooding like the insidious harbinger of a mortal sickness. He wore a ragged yellow T-shirt and sulu skirt; in his right hand he carried a brass tray with a burning camphor block surrounded with curry powder; dangling at his side, his limp left hand clutched an old bell, unskillfully dabbled with lumpy aluminum paint. He waved the dish at Kali's face with such frenzy that one might well suspect that he was trying to get her to withdraw her tongue, while chanting in a staccato

monotone. Laying aside the dish, he began preparing offerings to be laid at the feet of the goddesses. This consisted of chopping morsels of cucumber, banana, mango and coconuts, interspersed with mashed potatoes and peas, with an occasional flower or leaf. Increasing his incantations by several decibels he industriously ignited a half dozen or so camphor blocks which he placed in the portions of the floor not occupied by one of the many salads; upon the (Continued on page 30)







FUN WITH A GYRATING ANGEL

The damndest things happen to a man-of-the-world with a whirlybird

by Dan Stewart

EVERY TIME I READ a headline proclaiming another jet plane speed record I look at my whirlybird and get a smug smile on my face. Those pilots in the "hard hats" don't know what they are missing. And when I say that the helicopter opens many rare and exciting sights to a fellow, I'm not just talking about Mother Nature's wonders. Adventure? A whirlybird opens vistas to the man-of-the-world that a solid-gold Jaguar or Mercedes Benz can't touch. I discovered this added quality of pleasure incorporated in the plane by accident the summer day I was flying over Sewickley, a swank residential district just north of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was three o'clock in the afternoon of a sweltering hot day and each swimming pool I passed over as I lazied towards the heliport at the Golden Triangle made me hotter. I was about 500 feet high breezing along and tending to my own business when I suddenly spotted a large house in an isolated valley about five miles out of Sewickley. A high wooden fence completely surrounded the entire estate and leading off the patio was a large swimming pool that caught my eye because the water appeared bright red. "This I have to look at," I muttered as I eased back on the throttle and pitch stick.

I buzzed in low over the pool and was nearly directly over it when I noticed the girl sitting in a beach chair next to the water. That one view nearly cost me a \$30,000 helicopter. She was sunbathing and to put it tactfully there weren't going to be any portions of her body untouched by Old Sol. A white terry-cloth robe was lying beside her chair but she made no move to get it. She just waved gaily.

It was several seconds before I realized that she wanted me to come down. At first I was skeptical, not quite certain whether I should risk encountering an irate husband or not but a swimming pool filled with red water and a nude damsel waving an invitation were too much for my curiosity. Against my better judgement I set the whirlybird down on the driveway near the house and shut it down.

"Over here."

I walked towards the pool. My eyes, which pass a first class pilot's physical examination with ease, strained for a glimpse of the affable sunbather. However, by the time I joined her she was wearing the white robe. "Hello there," she called. "I'm glad you dropped in. I was lonely. Drink?"

"Thanks."

She brought a Martini over to the side of the pool where I was down on my knees scooping up a handful of water. I heard her laugh. "The water really isn't red, you know. My husband had the pool painted to match my hair."

I looked at the redhead. "I'd like not to meet your husband."

She smiled. "Relax. He won't be home until tomorrow evening."

Three drinks later and we were both sunbathing sans robe and flying suit. And when I took off in the whirlybird at noon—the following day—I knew more about redheads than a Kinsey researcher.

Helicopters aren't pretty. They look homemade and a little prehistoric. They fly like a big, ungainly bird, without grace or style, but they sure are handy to have around. I have flown every type of plane from light planes to Air Force supersonic jet fighters but give me a gyrating angel anytime. I first was impressed by their unique possibilities while flying an H-5 Sikorsky during the Korean fighting. Picking jet pilots out of the Sea of Japan or off some crag in Northern Korea far behind enemy lines proved to me their versatility. After the truce I did everything with a whirlybird except marry one. Blew frost from long distance telephone lines, dusted crops, rounded up cattle on a Texas ranch, fought forest fires and many other unusual jobs.

Then, after several years of ups and downs, I was hired by a Pittsburgh manufacturer to transport cargo and personnel between the home plant and other units scattered throughout Pennsylvania and New York. The company also had a DC-3 transport and its pilot really gave me the needle at first: "Sure, Dan. You handle the little hops around here. I'll take care of the man-

size flights down to Texas and over to California."

He had me doubtful until things began to hum and then the only tune he hummed was the blues. Sure he would take the president or vice-president or some other top official across the country for a week or so. They were the only one that took such long trips. Me? I had to take the secretaries and part-time office girls to the nearby plants. On these flights I learned the true worth of the whirlybird. Marie (I don't dare call her by her real name) was a brilliant office manager in charge of the home office in Pittsburgh. She was just as beautiful as she was brilliant, too. Every Wednesday I took her from Pittsburgh to Franklin where she would check the accounts of the factory located there. Sometimes we came back that evening. Other times she had so much work to do that we wouldn't fly back to Pittsburgh until sometime Thursday. She was an entrancing female with swaying hips and firm breasts that belied the cold exterior she always exhibited to me. Since I enjoyed my work I decided to play it real quiet-like and look for my pleasures elsewhere.

On the last Wednesday in August I flew Marie to Franklin as usual and spent the day flirting with the office girls. I had the blonde comptometer operator lined up for the night when Marie killed the plan by announcing she was finished and we could return to Pittsburgh. I kissed the blonde and patted the comptometer—or vice versa, I forget—and went out to the S-55 and wound it up.

"Did I ruin something for you?" Marie asked after we were airborne.

I grinned and did some fast thinking. I wasn't quite certain what she meant. "My job is to take you where you want to go," I answered warily.

"You might be surprised where I'd like to go."

I glanced at her and the old feeling returned. Marie had the same glint in her eyes that had been in the eyes of the comptometer operator. "Such as?"

She shrugged. "What difference does it make? Somebody would see us regardless of what airport we used and L.B. would get a full report if I didn't go straight to the office."

I shook my head. "You're not in an airliner now," I said softly. "I can land this whirlybird anyplace. Even behind that new motel on Route 322."

Marie blushed and I could see she was thinking of other things besides IBM machines and punched cards. "You'll have to show me," she said.

I showed her all right. Ten minutes after we parked the helicopter behind the motel and registered at the desk I was showing her things that the expensive electronic computer in the home office will never find an answer for—and without a worry on my mind. When the motel manager had asked for my license number I looked blank.

"What state?" he asked.

"Any state."

He looked at me as though I were crazy. "Come now, mister, let's quit joking."

I took him by the arm and led him over to the window. "We came in that."

He looked at the helicopter and grinned. "You had me fooled for a minute."

When Marie and I left the following morning after a memorable night the value of that S-55 was double what it had been the previous day. That girl could work with figures in more ways than one. In any other plane I would've been limited to landing at an airstrip but not with the gyrating angel. Anyplace, anytime with it.

Betty, a 36-24-36 dream with black hair and milky-

white skin liked excitement more than any female I have ever known. You know the type: athletic-minded, though built like a Southern belle more suited to mint juleps, soft music and lacy gowns. Fast sport cars, powerful speedboats, danger-filled ski runs—these seemed to give her the thrills she needed from life. From the moment I was first introduced to her at the Aero Club spring dance I tried every way possible to show her there were other pursuits just as thrilling and it wasn't even necessary to leave the apartment to experience them. But I never got off the ground as far as she was concerned. Early that summer an airline-captain friend of mine and myself bought a Bell 47H 'copter for our personal use. It was shortly afterwards that I had an idea how to get better acquainted with Betty. I phoned her early one July morning. "Betty? This is Dan. How would you like to go up to Presque Isle for the day? We could do a little water skiing."

"I don't think so, Dan. I don't get much kick out of skiing any more."

"Even if I towed you with my whirlybird?"

That did it. "You think you could?" She sounded excited.

"Sure. Want to try it?"

"I'll be ready in half an hour."

We flew up to Lake Erie late that morning and I sat the 47H down on a secluded beach just north of Erie. To all intents my only interest was her having an enjoyable afternoon on the water so I tied the tow line to the helicopter, gave her a short briefing on what to do and what not to do, and away we went. It worked out fine for her although it was damn tiring for me. All that afternoon I towed her up and down Lake Erie and she had the time of her life. At six thirty when we called it quits, she was practically bubbling with excitement. As soon as I stepped from the plane she ran up to me, threw her arms around my neck and kissed me hard. "Dan, you're a darling. I've never had such a thrilling afternoon." Her enthusiasm knew no bounds and when I held her close I could feel her body literally seething with hard-to-suppress emotion. Then I knew I was in. As some women need soft music or champagne to awaken their desire Betty needed physical excitement to get her started. After that it was easy. Five minutes after it was dark she slipped out of her Bikini and we spent the night on the beach beside the helicopter. The weather was warm but that particular strip of sand was scorching hot that July night.

The strangest experience I ever had resulted from a flight in the 47H. I had met Susan at a beach party and later had taken her to the Copa for an evening of fun. When I left her apartment that night she said, "I'd like to have you spend a week-end in the country with me sometime."

I must have looked startled because she blushed and quickly added, "Not by ourselves, silly. With friends at the lodge."

"Lodge?"

"Valley Lodge a few miles north of Phillipsburg. I often take the train over on Friday and come back Sunday night. It's great fun."

Since I'm always willing to try anything once, her invitation seemed loaded with opportunity and I agreed to go the next week-end. Early Saturday morning we took off from the downtown heliport in Pittsburgh and headed east. I kept wondering what the lodge would be like since I had never heard of a popular resort by that name. But if Susan travelled this far by train to spend a couple of days I decided it must be worth it.

(Continued on the following page)

It was. I'll never forget my landing in the parking lot there. Other times I haven't been quite certain of my position but when I saw five nude women waving to the helicopter from a knoll beside the lodge I was really confused. I started to climb.

"Aren't you going to land?" Susan asked. "Is something wrong?"

"We must have the wrong lodge."

She looked down at the nudes, then giggled. "Oh, didn't I tell you? This is a nudist lodge."

I was so surprised I nearly rammed a tree with the whirlybird.

Susan laughed and moved closer to me. "Don't you want to get some sun and exercise with me?" Her fingers played a gentle rhythm on my arm.

I looked at her. Ever since I had met her I had been trying to figure out a way to get her out of her clothes. Now she was eager to do just that and I was hesitating. That would never do. "All right. Down we go."

As soon as I touched down in the parking lot the helicopter was literally surrounded by people. Women, men and kids, and mine were the only pants in evidence. The whirlybird was the first plane to ever land at the lodge and it called for a celebration. As we walked to the lounge for a drink we passed a tennis court where a man wearing only a T-shirt and a blonde with a sunshade as her only piece of apparel were having a game. On the lawn in front of the lodge several naked girls were reading and listening to portable radios. Inside the lounge the prettiest redhead I'd seen in a long time came up and started talking with Susan. I couldn't keep my eyes off her, as Susan reminded me later at our table. "But I just loved that rose in her hair. It fascinated me," I said.

"Dan, you're sweet but quit lying. Your eyes never got that high."

She excused herself after the first Martini, presumably to go and freshen her makeup. Or so I thought. But when

she returned fifteen minutes later I had quite a shock—and I'm not easily shocked. She was as nude as the redhead had been, and let me tell you, she was born to be a nudist. Every curve, every feature of her five-foot-three body was perfect. "All right, honey, calm down," she said nonchalantly. "You haven't seen anything yet. By the way, you have room 301, right next to mine."

"Is that a hint?"

"It certainly is. You know, when in Rome do as the . . ."

"Okay, okay." I knew when I was licked. But after I had stepped out of my pants in my room my confidence vanished. I opened the door a crack and looked out into the hall. No one was in sight, so taking a deep breath, I stepped bravely out and just about knocked down the redhead who was walking by. She looked me right in the eye, said, "Welcome to the ranks," and that was that. I rejoined Susan in the lounge, had a few drinks, and within an hour I was cavorting around as though I didn't know what clothes were. And that night I discovered two important facts. One, the door between Susan's and my room was unlocked and two, nudists may not be excited by a naked body of the opposite sex walking by during the day but at night they enjoy themselves just like any other friendly, passionate male and female. At least, Susan and I did.

Early last spring I was contacted by a Canadian industrialist I'll just call "Mac." He wanted me to pilot his new Sikorsky S-62. The S-62 is a big whirlybird used mostly by the military. It has a turbine engine and a roomy, water-tight boat hull which permits takeoffs and landings on water, land and snow. The position sounded intriguing and I accepted, heading for Montreal on the next flight. I fully expected to fly a gray-haired, elderly company president from plant to plant or on an occasional fishing trip to one

of the back lakes. But I was fooled. Mac was only twenty-eight years old, had inherited his fortune and position from his late father, and the S-62 was a real flying yacht. It had been restyled so that the hull contained living and sleeping quarters, a kitchenette and a lavatory. I thought he looked at me rather strangely when I said, "This is a fine ship for hunting and fishing. Everything you need is right here."

The second week I found out about Mac's fishing and hunting trips. For several days he had been quizzing me about women, drinking, explaining that much of his business was ultra-secret and that I would have to be certain not to tell a soul about the trips we had to make. Not even his wife. "I never discuss my work," I said, emphatically.

On Tuesday of the second week I was in Canada and we took off at eight o'clock for a trip to Seven Islands. As we neared Chicoutimi, Mac stuck his head into the cockpit and said, "Set down at the hotel on the east side of Chicoutimi. Keep the engine running."

I didn't know what to expect when I touched down in the parking area behind the hotel. Government men, top brass of the R.A.F., an important scientist—all these ran through my mind as I waited. Suddenly two black-haired French-Canadian girls came running from the hotel towards the helicopter. Each carried a suitcase. Mac held the door open, they climbed in and away we went. Lolette was tall, willowy and willing. And attached to Mac. Georgia was short, cuddly and a firm believer in free love. She was my flight companion, compliments of Mac. We docked at a small unnamed lake north of Seven Islands.

I say you can't go wrong with a gyrating angel. Most of the large cities and many of the prominent hotels have heliports now. If you desire seclusion a whirlybird can set down most any place. □



FORT COC POST EXCI



A Glimpse of Hell (Continued from page 24)

flames he sprinkled curry powder and flower petals causing a pungent smog to arise in diaphanous swirls about the feet of the passive deities. Abruptly he straightened, again with the gyrating pan of fire, although this time he clanked the bell with such vigor as to scatter the nebulae and stir the sari wrapped around the prime Mariammam. At first, I thought she had moved away from the dissonance of the bell that seemed about to shatter my very bones. Before I could effect a withdrawal, the priest threw himself face down, with his head and shoulders indoors while the lanky torso and limbs reached into the more commodious confines of nature. Wailing and kissing the earthen floor, he pushed himself backwards just in time to avoid complete asphyxiation.

The Indian firewalking ceremony is performed by the Hindus as penance for sinners, the infirm and those stricken by physical debility. The firewalkers go through a rigid ten days of fasting and other strict privations to induce a state of Shakti, a special religious power, enabling the recipients to withstand the fire pit thus purging them of the evils they carry for those less able. To enlist the aid of nature this ceremony must be done during the full of the moon. This particular group of devout Hindus consisted of a skinny plumber, a handsome kitchen helper, a scar-faced bartender, a timid clerk, a nervous accountant, an ancient housewife, a wiry salesman, an intelligent dressmaker, a strong fireman in the boiler room of a hospital, and a reticent Sergeant from the famed Fijian police.

They had not been idle while their colleague was busy blinding the pixilated sisters and incarcerating them with salads. They had been performing a rugged native-style hoedown and switching themselves with branches of mango and neem. Their dancing had expanded until they now paraded around the perimeter of the roped enclosure, which included the temple and about fifty feet in front of it where the fire pit had been dug, preceded by three elders with homemade drums and one with two bagel-shaped instruments. The dancers took a burning camphor block in each hand (all other lights had been extinguished) and continued their emotional dance until all the blocks had sputtered out, leaving us in silent darkness.

Presently lights were turned on outside the pit end of the clearing in front of a shack about the size and shape of the Maha Devi Temple. A forlorn blanket hung before the door

like the skin of a tattered ghost and human shapes could be seen X-rayed from within. Old men jockeyed for position in the few small trees; younger men gathered in murmuring groups and boys formed a sitting semi-circle around the hut. Refreshments were being passed out like hot-dogs at a ball game, only this time they were sliced cucumber and banana sandwiches; before I had redeemed my acumen I had disposed of mine at the periphery of the crowd. Since I had no great longing for more confections I made a hasty retreat behind the makeshift curtain to find, much to my surprise, that I was in a dressing room of sorts. Five men were hurriedly dressing and applying make-up for the play they were about to perform. Three were dressing in lavish male costumes; one elegantly bedecked as a woman and the fifth, the clown, wore only a string around his trousers with a few leaves on it; but they all had on white-faced makeup—a reversal of our oldtime minstrel shows.

The comedy began with the trumpeting of a conch shell and the clatter of cymbals. The audience cheered as the players burst forth, leaping and spanking the seat of the buffoon with their wooden swords. With much interplay the performance proceeded along these lines:

A wealthy landowner died leaving his estate to four sons. Three of the brothers were crafty and wished to separate the fourth from his legacy. The fourth being overjoyed by his windfall felt he could now afford a wife. While he wooed the maiden of his choice, his brothers were systematically robbing him. Finally the girl consented and they were wed, only to discover that his brothers had taken all his property. When he pleaded with them they laughed at him and drove him from the kingdom.

A midnight chill swept over me, arousing a sudden need of shelter; or more exact, the desire for solitude. I hardly took notice of the forty tons of dogo wood being piled into the center of the pit for tomorrow's "moment of truth," but sought, instead, the isolation of the jungle path and the need of the tiring walk. As I cautiously pushed into the darkness ahead, I felt like the furtive clown stealing away into the night with my new treasure while still mourning the loss of another.

The next morning the tropical sun burned the trail; a chill still mingled with the sweat that was washing my body involuntarily. Stimulated by anxiety and the intense heat I became a heartbeat personified; the beat be-

came the throbbing of drums and I knew I was meeting the entourage on its way to the Sacred River, some seven miles away.

I listened to the staccato rhythm of the drums for some seconds before I saw the tall, proud Fijian policeman break through the bush, making a path for his wards. He was guardian to the Hindus against torment, ridicule or persecution from nonbelievers. Behind him came the drums and cymbals, then the firewalkers, each carrying some of the appurtenances necessary for the ritual at the river; they were followed by a homogenous assemblage of devotees; finally, bringing up the rear, walked a high priest, under a black umbrella held aloft by a young worshipper; all were barefoot.

One could hardly say they seemed to be rushing although the whole group moved with such determination that I was obliged to run to keep well enough ahead to shoot pictures. The cacophonous accompaniment meant to drive away evil spirits lent an air of unreality and the parade began to resemble hordes of nightmares on review.

When we reached the consecrated river an area was roped off for the firewalkers. A high priest cut the tall grass so they could pile their equipment on the ground, making a collection of leaves, flowers, string, coconuts, lemons, sections of rope, metal tridents, steel wire, curry powder and a miscellany of brass plates and urns.

With the completion of their portable altar, the firewalkers followed an old lady to a nearby tributary which had been sanctified for total immersion. The woman squatted at the river's edge to scoop salt water in her cupped hands, first drinking, then washing her face, the others watching her complacently. When she seemed satisfied that the water was untainted, she waded in until she was completely submerged with the exception of a few strands of her long grey hair which floated to the surface like the tentacles of a dead octopus. She remained motionless for some time, the figures around the edge as still as statues, then she burst out of the water like a conning tower, breaking the spell. The rest of them seemed greatly relieved as they entered the murky water one at a time; as a matter of fact, they appeared to be enjoying themselves for the first and last time during the whole divine services, splashing and playing like a bunch of kids. One of them put a burning camphor block to float on the surface of the muddy river until its life sputtered out. One by one as they walked slowly up the embankment, their happiness seemed to drain from

(Continued on page 35)

*Presenting for your looking
pleasure: a Marlboro girl.
But this is no free plug for a
cigarette. The name of the
looking pleasure featured
on these four Caper pages is
Beth Marlboro, and she
has nothing to do with ciga-
rettes. In fact, she doesn't
even smoke (and she dis-
likes a man who does); odd,
though, for a gal who's the
pride of a great tobacco-
producing state. Born
twenty-three years ago in
the little town of Rocky-
mount in Franklin County,
Virginia, she says she has
but one vice: showering far
too much attention on her
Mexican hairless dog,
"Marlon." "Man or beast,"
she says, "it spoils 'em."
Strong words, suh, but said
with a smile, by*

A MARLBORO GIRL









A Glimpse of Hell (Continued from page 30)

them back into the river; returning to the small clearing they gathered around the Khalasam.

As though the sun had been blotted out, the whole atmosphere changed from serious to grave; nothing could be heard but the legato whispering of many breathings, punctuated by the asthmatic reading of an old drummer of prayers written on a pocket-worn paper, lending the effect of whistling in the dark.

With an imperceptible nod, last night's bell clacker signalled to a smaller firewalker for assistance. Quickly and quietly the short man stepped forward, stripped to the waist and set to work. Using a long butcher knife, he quartered a lemon and placed it on a brass plate. The youngest firewalker began moaning and rolling his eyes; his lips moved in silent protestations. The assistant ran one of the metal tridents between his fingers and then tested the point with his index finger. Much like a nurse sterilizing a surgical instrument, he slid the metal point in and out of a piece of lemon or maybe he was only testing its ability to penetrate but for whatever reason he then handed it to the surgeon priest.

So weakened by his religious fervor, the young firewalker had begun to sag between two of his comrades who performed the double duty of preventing him from falling or escaping. No longer being able to support his dead weight they gently lowered him to his knees; he clasped his hands in an attitude of prayer; as though suffering from the chills of a high fever, his quivering lips released a vibrato of moans. When his head fell back, the high priest put his fingers inside the cheek to hold the loose skin for support and pushed the metal skewer against the cheek on the outside, with such force that the metal began to bend; then, a pop, like the sound of an iris stem being broken and the point had gone through. Now pressing against the inside of the other cheek, the priest leaned his weight on the trident until another pop was heard, leaving a startled firewalker kneeling on the ground with a metal spike suspended in the vacuum opening of his mouth and projecting on either side in bloodless holes.

Others knelt one by one to have metal spears tear through their cheeks, tongues and necks; long wires threaded the flesh of their backs and throats. One of the Hindu followers became delirious and had to be restrained by two men standing nearby. Most of the firewalkers were becoming more and more ecstatic although some of

them appeared to be in a trance of manic melancholy. Intermittently they were sprayed with cow urine.

When the last spike was driven home, the Pujari (leader) knelt to have the Khalasam balanced on his head and the entourage followed him away from the river with shouts of joy; all singing and dancing with such vigor that I thought it doubtful that they could continue the seven miles with such enthusiasm and still bridge the yawning mouth of the firepit.

A rope carried by a dozen boys enclosed the firewalkers against contamination from an impure outsider. The procession moved at a snail's pace as the Pujari leapt and sang with great excitement.

After a couple of miles I hitched a ride back so I could find a vantage point from which to take pictures. A tremendous crowd had already gathered and some Yogis were putting on an exhibition of calisthenics. The Indian women had been herded into a stockade, which is the customary tradition. The men, Fijians and Europeans, occupied the open areas. I sat next to the stockade but inside the hallowed ground around the pit.

Two men with fifteen foot rakes began leveling the pile of hot coals; a tidal wave of intense heat hit the spectators, forcing many to relinquish their ringside places; the rake handles smoked. Although the pit was covered with grey ash, it was impossible to look into it. I ran my hand over my face and brushed away cinders.

Suddenly an Indian lady fell over me, screaming and thrashing about on the ground. Many others ran to her assistance but they were unable to console her great agony. With the sound of the firewalkers' drums, the lady passed out; hurriedly she was dragged out of the way of the oncoming force. I ran to the end of the pit to await the crossing of the Pujari.

Step by step the Pujari hammered evidence and conviction at the handful of skeptics who had come as amateur sleuths to expose his chicanery. Once across he began to snort violently and leaping so high as to literally bounce the Khalasam against his head. One by one he was followed across the fire bed, some running while others walked unsteadily and slowly. One man dashed from the audience and strolled across, searing his white trousers; turning to walk back, he nearly collided with another. Three of the firewalkers stood hesitatingly at the pit's edge and finally sheepishly walked around it to safety.

Hundreds of worshippers gathered

around the door of the Temple where the Pujari was screaming and pounding his chest violently as though his wrath alone could drive out the evil. He poured a pan of hot coals over his head in an evil-purging firebath; then reaching into the crowd he caught the hair of a sinner, dragging her to the ground at his feet while he made pronouncements over her prostrate form. Abruptly, he lurched through the crowd and returned to dance across the coals, causing flames to shoot up at every step or two. Although the others tried to restrain him, he recrossed seven times, each crossing taking more and more time until we expected to see him literally burst into flame. Thrusting his chin forward he returned to his preaching outside the Temple door; dragging frightened people into the ring, smearing their heads with ashes and curry powder, then beating himself about the head and chest like a spoiled child. Finally he raised his hands for silence; he took up a plate of burning coals and shouted a declaration of such magnitude that the crowd seemed to sway away from him. He ran back to the pit and slowly walked to the center, smiled and preached—for eighteen seconds by my watch; there were many protestations before he calmly walked toward the cool grass. His look of victory told me the ceremony had ended.

When I turned I saw my sister; we looked at each other as though to say "What the devil are you doing here?" One of the firewalkers asked if we'd take a "family-type" portrait of them. We were glad to oblige, taking advantage of the opportunity to shoot the anti-climactic picture of their feet, which, although not very pretty, were far from burned. I saw one of the firewalkers put my cigarette out with his bare foot. They were really a mess, stained with mud, ashes, curry powder and damp with cows' urine, their eyes bloodshot and glazed, but they tried to smile. Jini and I left for home relieved, a bit vacuous and very tired.

After I had showered I walked barefoot into the yard to get my wash and wears off the clothes line. I stepped on a burning cigarette Mr. Higgins had thrown from his bedroom window. I was invalided all the next day, and I missed a new movie in town!

I haven't talked much to anyone about firewalking; nor made any astounding discoveries about how it's done. If there were any tricks they certainly evaded me. I can't even write a technical thesis on the whys and wherefores of firewalking. But I can verify that the pit was full of hot burning coals. Now, look at your watch for eighteen seconds. □

I CAN CERTAINLY see why Mr. Hadley, my former boss, reacted the way he did, and although I was most unhappy to leave Hadley, Inc., I guess things have worked out pretty well. Still, there were two sides to the story and I think you will agree, when you hear the full story, that Mr. Hadley should have given more consideration to mine.

I suppose I had been pressing my attentions on the remarkably-developed Miss Armstrong for at least six months—with considerable lack of success. It was rumored around the office that Miss Armstrong was strictly top brass property; that her almost perfect figure (she had the physical misfortune to possess two breasts unusual in size and dimension, but somewhat out of proportion to the rest of her body) had not been touched by anyone outside the narrow little circle of the company's top executives; in other words, the three vice presidents of Hadley, Inc., and an occasional regional salesman in town for reassignment. Mr. Hadley, of course, never indulged.

But, as I said, even these grantings of favors on the part of our Miss Armstrong were rumors; nothing so definite, anyway, as to stamp her out of bounds to the recently promoted Merchandising Manager—me.

Over the months I had tried everything: the eager gosh - why - don't - we - ride - up - the - ladder - of - success - together approach; the logical there - isn't - any - reason - why - two - people - working - in - the - same - company - shouldn't - be - friends approach; the indifferent any - time - you're - ready - so - am - I approach; and others too subtle to describe.

But somehow I just could not get started with Miss Armstrong. Then one day something entirely unexpected, but very pleasant, happened.

It was about 10:15 and I was at the water cooler imbibing a Scotch and water (*sans* Scotch) when I felt something firm—but definitely soft—touch my shoulder. I reacted rather abruptly, thereby coming as close as I ever had to feeling one of the charms of the bosomy Miss Armstrong—who happened to be standing then at my side.

"Er, uh, good morning, Dorothy—sorry," I mumbled, wiping the water (I think it was water) from my chin and inviting her, with a gesture, to have a drink. "You shouldn't creep up on a fellow like that; no telling what might happen."

"Maybe some day I'll find out," she purred, bending over to take a drink, while I held the water button with one hand and restrained the other.

When she finished she straightened up (her chin was perfectly dry, wouldn't you know) and said: "Well, it's about time you asked me to have a drink. I thought you were mad."

"What!" I almost yelled. "That's a fine thing to say. I've asked you to have lunch, have cocktails, have dinner, spend the evening, spend the night, spend the weekend, be my mistress, get married, bear my children, work in our garden, share a form 1040, be my insurance beneficiary—and you say it's about time I asked you for a drink! One more crack like that and I'm liable to start my campaign all over again."

"Well, why don't you?"

Odd, I thought, this crazy dame sounded like she wasn't kidding. Something told me not to pick up the bait, but she just happened to decide that her blouse needed tucking in then, which necessitated a heavy intake of air and a slight throwing out of her chest—and they came at me like two tremendous magnets.

Backing away slightly, but unable to get out of the

office

magnetic field, I said, "Well, all right, let's see if you're kidding. How about tonight? Dinner?"

"Oh, Johnnie, how sweet of you to ask me—a big executive like yourself. I'd love to."

Then suddenly a voice from down the hall yelled, "Dorothy, telephone," and she headed in the voice's direction. Over her shoulder, she said, "Sounds like real fun. Downstairs at five, O.K.?"

"O.K.," I said, loud enough for her to hear, "I'll be there."

Now what do you suppose prompted her sudden about-face, I thought as I returned to my office. It couldn't be that my being made Merchandising Manager had anything to do with it. Well, maybe it did. Seems incredible, I thought, but any way she wants to play the game is fine by me. If just being made a junior executive of Hadley, Inc., brought such a dish as Miss Armstrong around that fast, I could see I was going to like the business world.

I was still dame-dreaming about what was in store for me when I became a vice president, when I realized it was lunch time. Passing up Bill Thompson's invitation to grab a bite to drink at Harry's Bar and Grill, I decided I would go home and slick up a little for the evening. I could use a shave, a shower, and a clean shirt. After all, Miss Thompson had taken me somewhat by surprise.

At the apartment I got the mail, then went up. I had a beer and sandwich and thumbed through the mail. The usual junk, except for a letter from mother. Good old Mother: a check and her traditional tiding, "Greetings on this your Natal Day." So it was, I thought. But you're as young as you feel, I always say, and right then I was feeling like a tiger—a young tiger. I finished the sandwich, fixed a cup of coffee and headed for the shower.

I emerged a new man, bristling with dering-do. I started to comb my hair: "Brylcream, a little dab'll do you, Brylcream, you look so debonair." Pretty good voice, I thought. Miss Thompson is getting an all-around man.

Back at the office, perfectly attired for the evening ahead, I began to get restless. According to the clock on the wall it was four p.m., but my hormones were beginning to act like it was five minutes to five. This is silly, I thought, I'm a big boy now. It's just another date. But what a date!

I settled down to read—for the third time—a report on our new Milwaukee distribution program. To this day, I don't know whether our Milwaukee merchandising plan was a success or not.

At last; five minutes to five. With studied casualness, I hastened to the men's room, washed up, and then went back to my office for my coat and hat. Then calmly, as if the air raid warning had just sounded, I headed for the stairs.

"Yoo hoo, Johnnie!" She was standing over by the cigaret machine.

I strolled over, acting indifferent. You know the approach: Lucky you caught me, I almost went off forgetting our date. Hah!

"Where'll it be first?" I asked. "How about going down to the club for a drink?"

"Oh, that would be fun later," Dorothy said, "but

romance

*The perils of dame dreaming around
the water cooler* **By Raymond Hartley**



let's go over to my apartment for a drink. I want to get dressed first, anyway."

Well, I thought, now what could be better? This girl really knows how to live. Over to your apartment for a drink, eh? Talked me into it.

We caught a cab—luckily—and got in. "Where's the homestead?" I asked Dorothy. "Remember, this is the first time I've had the pleasure."

"Oh, yes, that's right." Then, to me and the driver, she said, "East 65th—between Lexington and Third."

A few minutes later we were unlocking the street door of an old but well-preserved brownstone.

"Pretty nice," I said as we started up the stairs. "Why didn't you tell me daddy owned Hadley, Inc."

"Oh, don't be silly. This old place has been done over into separate apartments. As you will see, mine is very modest—and I share it with another girl."

At that I uttered a very disgruntled "hmmmmm" and Dorothy quickly added, "... but she's in Connecticut. Has been all week."

Things suddenly looked brighter.

Dorothy unlocked the door and we went into her apartment, which was real cozy. It had that why-don't-the-two-of-us-have-a-party look. We took off our coats, then she pointed to a little bar in the corner, and said, "Help yourself. I'll have a double bourbon on the rocks." With that she headed for what I presumed was the bedroom—and I headed for the bar.

At the door she paused, turned around, and in a voice ringing with implications which could not be mistaken, said softly, "Johnnie, I'm going to slip into something a little more comfortable. If I'm not back in five minutes, bring my drink in here."

I knocked over two bottles of Scotch, but managed to look reasonably composed as I turned around, trying to think of something smart to reply. But it wasn't necessary—she had disappeared, closing the door behind her.

I started to fix the drinks, but it was not easy. If you have ever tried to fix a dry Martini and a bourbon on the rocks while looking at your watch every ten seconds, you'll know what I mean.

Three light years passed, but my watch only recorded one minute. I drank a Martini. She should be ready now. Only two minutes! My, I thought, how time drags when you're drinking Martinis. I decided to add a little more gin to the pitcher. Then I poured another one—right up to the brim. I'd better sip it a little—it might spill. It went down real easy. I decided that I might just as well finish it.

Four and a half minutes. With a drink in each hand, I headed for her door. Hmmmmm. Boy, those Martinis were beginning to feel good. Real warm—all the way down.

I had a sudden brainstorm!

I paused and put the drinks on a little end-table by the door. Then I took off all my clothes—I mean *all*! Why not go for broke, I thought.

Then I picked up the drinks, kicked open the door, and walked in. . . . Just as the whole office staff of Hadley, Inc., including Richard Hadley himself, burst into: "Happy birthday to you, happy birthday to you, happy birthday dear Johnnie . . ."

It was a real surprise. □

Sex Before Breakfast (Continued from page 13)

effect on their sex life. City officials in Los Angeles admit, however, that a good deal of public grumbling that rumbles in on them whenever the smog blanket is down is inspired by mass sexual dissatisfaction.

It's well known that polluted air cramps the style of top athletes. For this reason in some areas where industrial gases sweep over a stadium wise coaches keep an oxygen tank standing on the sideline so that weary players can revive themselves with a whiff now and then of energizing air. The physiological reason behind this maneuver is that our organs can only function at top ability depending on the supply of oxygen they get. Sex organs are most sensitive to oxygen deficiency.

The damage incurred by morning sexual intercourse in a small bedroom crammed with stale used up breath can only be guessed at. A study made by the air conditioning industry declared that seventy to seventy-three per cent of big city residents slept with their windows shut tight. Most Americans start stirring in the morning in a room stuffed with flat, cooked-out air that kills flies and wilts flowers.

The fight between SBB and SAS (Sex Before Breakfast—Sex After Supper) probably started close outside the gates of Paradise. It will

likely continue until the last man is with the last woman. Up to Dock's time the French have managed to hold their own against the best arguments rolled into battle. To the argument that the body's organs need fresh oxygen for engaging in athletic action, the Frenchman simply says, "Keep your windows open." He scoffs at the notion that morning light does not flatter a woman. "Are flowers that open in the morning ugly?"

As for the American abhorrence for "morning mouth" the Frenchman snorts this answer: "We use apples." You'll find a bowl of apples next to almost every bed in France. The bedroom without apples is an unhappy bedroom—look for other signs; divorce is on the way. This explains why next to the grape the apple is the most popular fruit in France. In the dim, wavering light of dawn a hand gropes out from under the sheets toward the night table, fumbles over the bowl, then pulls back clutching an apple or two. The whole fruit, core and all, is eaten while the mind is half-conscious. The shock of digestion wakens the body; chewing freshens the mouth, and then at last the Frenchman is ready to think of love. . . . What is unesthetic about an apple? In Greek mythology, Paris awarded the golden apple to the most beautiful woman in

the world. And didn't the apple begin sex in Eden?

Dock's warning was something else again. How can you shoot back at a scientific cannon like Dock's when your only weapons are proverbs, traditions and untested habits? Social critics mournfully predicted that if France adopted Dock's advice, work production and job efficiency would drop while the divorce rate would climb. A few laborites kicked off an unsuccessful campaign aimed at having the work day started later. No doubt a few Frenchmen yielded and glumly copied the American night pattern. ("That's to be expected," a Paris radio commentator rasped. "After all, some of our countrymen co-operated with Nazis too.")

Some Frenchmen simply closed their ears and their minds and continued their early morning habits, as if Dock didn't exist. The most typical Gallic reaction is reflected in the course chosen by a member of the Chamber of Deputies.

"What do I do about Dock?" the philosophical Deputy said, smiling at his interviewer. "I prepare to die."

Americans meanwhile taunted their overseas neighbors with an old college song:

"Uncle Joe and Auntie Mabel
fainted at the breakfast table.
This should be sufficient warning,
never do it in the morning." □

The Bitter Wood (Continued from page 11)

"I'm not," Macklin said. "I'll finish it."

Luther turned. "Leave them be, Macklin—"

"I've a score for settling," Macklin shook his head.

"If you gun him, I'll kill you."

He turned back to his path.

"I'm not a man to hold a grudge," Macklin called after him, "but you leave me no way—"

In the second that Luther heard, and understood, his reflexes called out against the impossibility behind him. Run—run, the thought came instantly but his feet seemed mired in nightmare mud. Then the shot and the blow to his back together spun him around, and he fell facing the mountain height.

His rifle barrel lay inches from his face. An ant had struggled onto it and, as if through a magnifying glass, Luther watched the insect clamber along the scratches in the blue metal. Far behind it, Macklin was quickly climbing the trail.

Luther reached out his hand. The movement split open the stupor and pain gushed out, and he heard for the

first time the sound of agony. More slowly he edged his hand forward until his fingers felt along the stock and fitted the trigger. His left arm was under him—he had to shift his weight to release it. The pain ripped at him, but the arm was free. Like independent life, his left hand crept to the rifle barrel, raised it. Macklin was high on the trail now. The sights held to his distant figure, then lost it to the pines. The sights caught him up again, held him—Luther knew he held him in the moment that he pulled the trigger—

The rifle recoiled unresisted. The shock rolled Luther over, and he twisted down the slope, bouncing and bumping, then hard into a tree. He lay face up in the grass at the trunk and looked up at the sky patches interwoven in the canopy of the pine. Always reaching, he thought, always he had been reaching out . . . and now—nothing. Then he noticed the smell of the woods, the sweet, cool wet scent of the mountain flooding over him like the spill of an unleashed dam. □



SICK JOKES

Here's a sample of what Jackie Gleason has called "six feet under" jokes. This sample is part of a choice selection recently put together by Max Rezwin under the title, "Sick Jokes, Grim Cartoons and Bloody Marys," and published by The Citadel Press. You can buy the entire collection for one dollar. Happy sadistic laughing!

"Mommy, may I go swimming?"
"You certainly may not, Sheldon. You know very well your hooks will get rusty."



"Today we are privileged to have with us the head of the recent Yale expedition to Africa."

"Must be getting close to town—we're hitting more people."

"Mom, Dad's been hit by a car!"
"Don't make me laugh, Sheldon. You know my lips are chapped."

"Mrs. Brown, can Johnny come out and play ball?"

"But you children know he has no arms or legs."

"That's okay. We want to use him for second base."

"Mommy, where are the marshmallows? Sheldon's on fire."

"Mommy, one of the boys in school called me a sissy."

"What did you do, Sheldon?"
"I hit him with my purse."

"Mommy, how come Daddy's so pale?"

"Shut up, and keep digging."

"Mommy! The power mower just cut my foot off!"

"Stay outside till it stops bleeding, dear. I just mopped."

"But Henry, that isn't our baby."
"Shut up. It's a better carriage."

"Mommy, I hate my sister's guts."
"Shut up and eat what's put in front of you."

"Mommy, why are we having this Christmas tree in August?"

"I've told you twenty times if I've told you once, Sheldon. You've got leukemia."

"Mrs. Brown, can Sheldon come out and play?"

"Now, you children know he has leprosy."

"Then can we come in and watch him rot?"

Then there was the ghoul who sent his girl a heart for Valentine's Day—still beating.



"Whaddya mean, 'eeeyah'?"

"I know you're a hunchback, darling—but before you meet Mother, do try to straighten up a little."

There was a young girl from St. Paul

Who attended a newspaper ball.

Her dress caught on fire

And burnt her entire

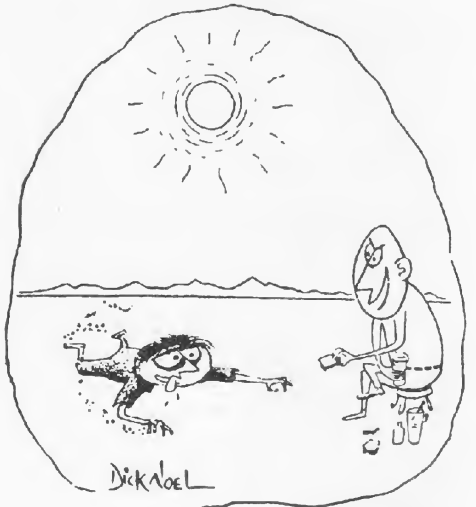
Front page, sporting section and all.

"This is the third operating table you've ruined this month, Doctor. Please don't cut so deep."

"Drink your soup, dear, before it clots."

"Can I play in the sand box yet, Mommy?"

"Not until we find a better place to bury Daddy."



"Peanut-butter sandwich?"

"Mommy, can I have a new dress?"

"Of course not. You know it won't fit over your iron lung."

"Aren't you the brave young man who tried to save my son from drowning when he broke through the ice?"

"Yes'm."

"Well, what did you do with his mittens?"

"Shirley, for the last time—either you stop playing with Sheldon, or I shut the coffin."

"I don't care who you are, Fatso. Get them reindeer off my roof."

"Now show Daddy exactly where you found that head." □



"... and yet there's something about them that appeals to me."



SPRING Revival

His songs were stirring, especially that one spring night

By John D. Keefauver

"IF YOU WASN'T SO all the time mean to me," Nate Sasen was saying in that rich, suggestive voice of his, "I might just bring you a nice jelly roll from out our cookie department."

"I ain't studying no jelly roll," Cathy answered, huffily but with a purr that nestled in close to Nate's warm-feeling words.

"That's 'cause you ain't had one. Most folks know we got the best in town."

Then Nate said something that made Cathy giggle; said something that Julie, in the parlor two rooms away, couldn't make out. But she'd heard enough to know it had nothing to do with the business of delivering groceries. Julie paced over to the bay window. When the brightness of the May day struck her glasses, she made a nervous dab at her nose with a little linen handkerchief. Heaven knew she couldn't read with that handsome Nate Sasen out in the kitchen keeping Cathy from her work and putting no telling what kind of ideas into her twenty-year-old head, something he'd been doing almost every day for more than a month, ever since he started making the deliveries for Chic Bales' store.

"Honeybun is all right for a poor-like gal." Nate's big man-voice flowed all through the house whenever he spoke above a whisper. "But for a gal like you, a gal with right rich taste, it's just not got that ole jelly roll tang."

That sorry Nate Sasen—he'll get Cathy in trouble as sure as there's a moon. Julie gazed out over the May-green lawn and the bright rows of flowers that led down to the street, and she tried not to listen. Her hay fever invariably became worse when something upset her. She held out one of her small hands to afternoon sunlight that slanted into the big parlor; it cast a pale glow, golden and warm, on her arm.

"Cold soup ain't no 'count, too. But a hot fire makes it boil."

And both Cathy and Nate exploded in rich laughter that flowed through the dining room and into the parlor, curling around Julie.

"You Nate, you," Cathy panted between laughs. "Your momma raised a devil."

Julie gave her nose a firm little dab and stepped swiftly toward the kitchen. She was determined to get that Nate Sasen out of her house before he had Cathy making a complete fool—or worse—of herself.

"Hello, Miss Clay," Nate said, flashing her his sun-like grin, a smile that dulled the sharpness of the anger in her his talk with Cathy had made. But she was glad he grinned; it helped her to speak to him calmly, the way an educated woman would speak to the young man who brought her groceries.

"Don't you think you'd better make the rest of your deliveries, Nate? Someone might be needing their groceries this afternoon."

He rolled out a rich chuckle. "Nothing left in that old pickup but a little order for Mrs. Benson."

Cathy, who was drying a final dish, said, "It's too early for starting supper, anyway."

She would not turn from the sink; her back, soldier-straight now within her white uniform, silently sang defiance. One buttock shook in rippling irreverence as she wiped the dish.

Nate suddenly stepped to the back door before Julie could think of something more forceful to say. "But come to think of it, Miss Clay, maybe you're right. That there Mrs. Benson, she might for sure be waiting for her order right this very minute. This here very second maybe. Who can tell?"

Julie felt the sassiness in his voice, a trace of the same tone he'd used in talking to Cathy about jelly rolls. She spun too quickly and went back to the parlor as Nate went out the back door. Pressing her linen handkerchief to her nose, she felt a distinct tremor in her fingers. These young people nowadays

were so difficult to deal with; they seemed to get the best of you all the time, no matter what.

But at least her trip to the kitchen was successful in stopping Cathy's infantile giggling. And after a few minutes, she heard Nate whirr off in Chic Bales' truck. When the sound had died she went out across the porch that ran the length of one side of the house and walked out onto the lawn.

Her father didn't turn when Julie came up to him. He was sitting in his favorite chair—a heavy oaken one years older than the rest of the lawn furniture—and was gazing into the distance. She knew he probably hadn't changed his position in the chair for fifteen minutes.

"You comfortable, Papa?"

He gave her a gentle, untroubled smile. "Fine, Julie, fine."

"Not getting too much sun there, are you?"

"Everything's fine, Julie. Thank you."

"You call if you need anything, now."

She strolled idly around the borders of the lawn, putting her fingertips to blossoms from the beds of azaleas and roses and jonquils. She realized after awhile that Cathy wasn't coming out onto the lawn for their usual afternoon chat; she'd gone directly from the kitchen to her cottage behind the house. In the two years since Cathy came in from the country to work for Julie, a few minutes of conversation after dishes were done had grown into an expected ceremony; and Julie was certain now that her appearance in the kitchen must really have angered her.

She picked off a scarlet primrose and brought it with her to the lawn swing beside her father's chair. Leaning back into the plump cushion, she pinned the rose at her shoulder. It made a bright splash of color against the gray dress.

Such a brilliant spring day. It was a shame its beauty had to be marred by unpleasantness. But Cathy was such

a child. She'd soon stop pouting. She had sulked the same way when she, Julie, had brought her that nice print from Birmingham to replace those gaudy magazine pictures Cathy had tacked on the walls of her cottage room. Julie had done so much to brighten Cathy's cottage—a new curtain, a bit of lace for her dresser. So many things.

Well, she'd be out of her bad humor by tomorrow. Julie felt certain of it when the victrola began playing in the little cottage.

"Oh, he walks with me

"And he talks with me

"And he tells me I'm his own."

It was an old religious record she had given Cathy last Christmas along with the victrola. Cathy rarely played any of the others Julie had given her, preferring what she called her "happy time songs," ones she'd bought on her own or been given by someone else. But for some reason she liked *In The Garden*.

"You remember how we used to love that one, Papa?"

Her father blinked his pale old eyes several times as if returning from sleep.

"Oh. Oh, yes, the flower," he finally said. "Fine, fine flower."

"I mean the song, Papa. Remember how Mr. Cameron could sing it—a long time ago."

The old man smiled pleasantly.

"Cameron? Oh, yes. Yes, indeed, Julie. Fine man, Cameron."

He didn't remember, Julie could see. Since he had passed eighty, he seldom recalled anything but dreamy little periods in his childhood.

But Julie could remember.

"... and he tells me I'm his own."

How Matthew Cameron could sing that. The little church seemed to tremble when he held out his long powerful arms and let those rich baritone notes roll from his throat. Everyone, of course, knew that Matthew Cameron's big voice—in a way, it reminded her of Nate Sasen's—was what had made the revival that spring the most successful one in many years.

But as stirring as his songs in church, they were touched with even more spirit when he sang just for her alone, in the parlor with her playing for him on the old upright piano, or in his small convertible as they drove along country roads on late afternoons—or, at least once, at night.

"He's a big, bad daddy,

"But I love the things he do . . ."

Cathy had changed the record on her phonograph to one of those noisy, screaming jazz songs, and Julie pushed herself up from the swing with a sigh.

"I'm going in and try to take a nap, Papa. I'll get a headache if I listen to

those terrible records Cathy's started playing."

He gave her a cheerful smile. He probably couldn't even hear the victrola, Julie knew. And if he did, the sounds from it were ignored as simply more uninteresting noises of a world long grown strange to him. After smiling at his daughter, he turned his gaze back across the street and over the houses to the hills beyond the town.

It was just past ten o'clock that night when Julie saw the shadow.

Earlier, the phonograph had begun again soon after Cathy had finished the supper dishes, and after the first few records she had played nothing but her "happy time songs."

Sitting in the parlor, Julie could hear the songs only faintly. Even so, the shrill fragments of music that did penetrate the house's heavy old walls were disturbing, and although she could find no clear explanation for it, she had a definite feeling that things were wrong. For the first time in many months, and for no apparent reason, she felt afraid—and, yes, excited, too.

Her father had gone to bed at nine, a habit with him. The parlor seemed larger after he left it, and the dead stillness of the huge old room was accentuated by the bursts of trumpet notes and clarinet shrieks that stabbed at her.

She read three chapters of a new novel, but she found herself reading pages over and over. Putting the book aside, she picked for a while at a new everyday dress she was making, noticing for the first time how colorless the flowers in the print were. She wished she had built a little blaze in the fireplace—more for color than for warmth. At ten o'clock she decided to go to bed.

In her bedroom she raised the blinds and stood by the window several minutes looking out at the two great pecan trees and the line of crepe myrtles that followed the stone path-way to Cathy's cottage. Even that early in the night the moon was high and full, and here was just enough breeze to make the leaves turn and gleam silver in its light.

The music from the cottage now seemed strained, its rhythms jagged. Julie tensed with the clarinet cries, thinking: something bad is going to happen. Something bad.

The shadow loomed then for an instant on Cathy's window shade. It moved away quickly, but in a few moments it leaped back again, and again, a powerful-looking bulk of a shadow jerking to the wail of the music, and Julie knew clearly it couldn't have been formed by Cathy alone.

"After all I've done for that girl," she murmured, speaking for only herself to hear. Tart dampness touched her eyes, and she felt she would cry if the tearing music did not stop.

"After all I've done," louder now, and she was moving almost frantically down the steps and through the kitchen and out into the back yard. "All I've done for her." She was halfway down the walk to the cottage when the record on the victrola screamed high and ended.

The silence jarred her to a halt. The breeze had died in the trees and the crepe myrtles; she heard nothing now but her own unsteady breathing.

Then Cathy's laugh from the cottage shredded the quiet—a full-throated laugh. And then a man's caressing voice:

"Wine me, dine me, baby. Dinner-time me."

The crazy rich rhythm of Nate Sasen's words struck Julie full, like a wave big with the power of all the ocean behind it. She felt she would fall unless she could find something to hold on to. Instinctively, she reached out her hand.

And quickly snatched it back with a gasp. Wheeling toward the big house, she raced up the stone path in an awkward, stumbling sprint.

Her fingers had touched a limb of a crepe myrtle bush, and it had felt like human flesh—hard, naked flesh.

Julie left the light off while she undressed.

She had been standing on the dark side of her room for minutes, her fingers pressed against the wallpaper, her eyes closed. The wall, too, was hard, and naked. And Nate's voice—yes, it was like Matthew Cameron's: rich and body-like. It, too, made her naked.

She let her clothes fall to the floor. She left them crumpled in a little pile and stepped naked into the shaft of moonlight from the tall window that faced Cathy's cottage. A new breeze stirred the curtains.

She stood in the moonlight and let her fingers skip in light presses down over her hips. On Cathy's shade she could see no shadow now. And the victrola remained silent.

The moon was full on her and the night was clear and pregnant, a night like another when Matt Cameron had driven her far out on a country road and then had walked with her through a meadow.

She raised her arms above her head and began moving her hips in a slow rhythm as the light in Cathy's cottage went out.

"Big bad daddy," she began to hum. "Big bad daddy. Love the things he do." □



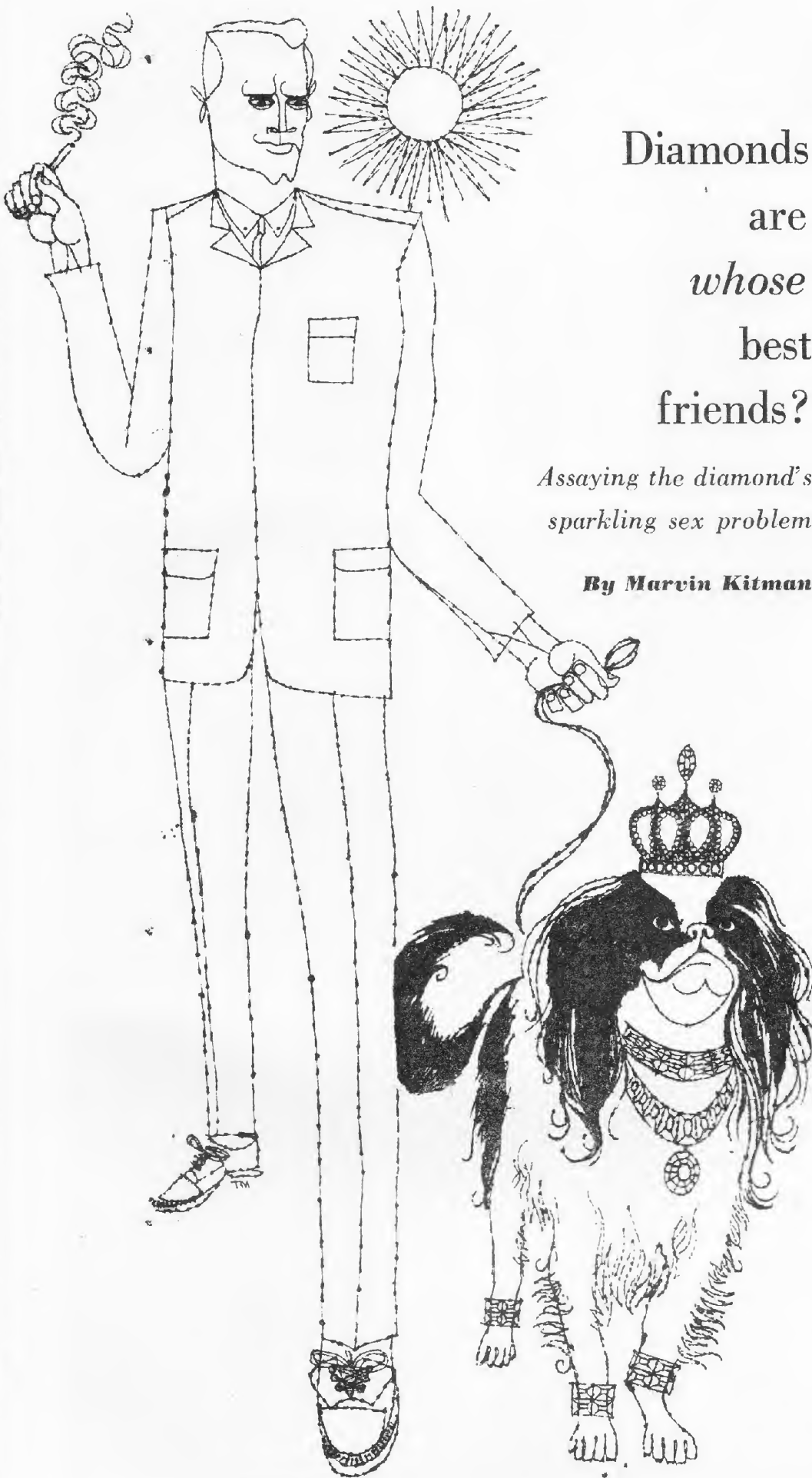
JUNE



IS BUSTIN' OUT ALL OVER



... June Wilkinson, CAPER's favorite girl friend, that is. You'll remember her from our May, 1959, issue when she appeared as a "Photographer's Private File" subject, including top position as cover girl. You asked to see more of this hottest of Hollywood newcomers and here she is: an English contribution to from-head-to-toe beauty, especially in the well-stacked division (43-21-36). An experienced hand at English TV, movies and night clubs, June is now gathering the same experience over here.



Diamonds are whose best friends?

*Assaying the diamond's
sparkling sex problem*

By Marvin Kitman

RECENTLY, an executive with a major U.S. business firm received a diamond ring for his birthday. His mixed feelings about the gift—only a pair of lace panties could have left him feeling more mixed—was testimony to the effectiveness of a campaign to convince the American public (which now buys seventy-five per cent, or more than four tons, of the world's yearly diamond production) that girls are not only a diamond's best friend—but a diamond's only friend.

A diamond-buyer on New York's West Forty-seventh Street, the heart of the U.S. diamond market, recently assayed the diamond's sparkling sex problem this way: "A man feels funny wearing a diamond today. That's the biggest jewel robbery of all time."

Once upon a time diamonds were a man's best friend. He wore them on his shoes (a pair of Sir Walter Raleigh's going-to-court shoes twinkled with £7,000 worth of diamonds—back when a £ was a £), in his shirt (before imitation mother-of-pearl was conceived), on his overcoat, on the zipper of his pants fly (James Brocato, better known as "Diamond Jim" Moran, pioneered that style), on his saddle and his sword (even down-to-earth General Ulysses S. Grant had a be-diamonded sabre).

He also wore them hanging from his ear (as late as a decade ago, diamonds were worn by Virginia mountaineers in the belief they aided eyesight), in his teeth ("Diamond Jim" wasn't called that for nothing) and, of course, on his finger. But that was before diamonds switched friends.

What did man lose? More than the right to call nature's handsomest bauble his own. At stake was the most naked symbol of power. He who had the diamond throughout history was always the king, pasha, prince of church, potentate—above all, *master*. Social scientists studying the transfer of pants in our society could do no better than put loupe to eye and note the manner in which the diamond's sex has changed.

A combination of forces have been at work. Recently, a public relations man for DeBeers Consolidated Mines Ltd. (a company characterized by the *Wall Street Journal* as "the last of the great international monopolies"; it controls the mining and marketing of almost all the diamonds shipped to the U.S.) explained his firm's reason for mak-

ing sure diamonds are identified as girls' best friends. "Smart women wouldn't buy and wear diamonds if men they considered *offensive* also wore them. Women buy more diamonds than men. Naturally, we're interested in selling diamonds."

(So that there is no mistaking DeBeers policy, the monopoly regularly runs full page advertisements in U.S. periodicals like the *Saturday Evening Post*. The pitch is as soft as soap:

"In dappled leaves and dancing shadows, the forest spins its sweet enchantments, repeating, inspiring your dreams of love. And to this magic, nature adds her gayest spokesman, the engagement diamond that was wrought in earth just for you. Ancient, new, and eternal, this light of love will shine to tell your happiness. . . ."

Gushers like that are designed to make men run out and buy diamonds as quickly as they might buy Lysol.)

While DeBeers is doing its best to mop up masculine interest in the diamond—and who, except thoughtful stockholders, would fret for an industry which knowingly slices its potential market in half—admittedly they are moving with the current of history, not against it. The masculine fight to hang on to the diamond—and power—has been going badly for sometime.

Even though an occasional female eccentric wore diamonds while they were still a staple in the male wardrobe, it wasn't until the late 18th Century that diamonds showed signs of bi-sexuality. (The diamond industry, incidentally, gives Agnes Sorel, a beauty in Charles VII's court, credit for breaking the ice, so to speak. The first time she wore a rough-cut diamond necklace she complained of a chafed neck. Her contemporaries thought she was a pain in the neck, too; they claimed her bodice was just an open jewel case). A revolution and a fop, however, really greased women's way.

The Reign of Terror during the French Revolution of 1789 was the first half of the one-two punch. *Egalitarians* knew of no better way to pick out an *uncommon* man for the guillotine than by the sparkle of his diamond shoes, his diamond rings, his diamond brocaded suiting. Diamonds went out of fashion overnight in France that year.

George Bryan (Beau) Brummell's hand in fumbling the diamond was less bloody but just as effective. It used to take Beau nine hours each morning-afternoon to get

washed, shaved (he wiped his razor on pages of first editions of classics) and dressed. Still, in the 19th Century, he championed simplicity in men's fashions. And the English dandy didn't care for diamonds. So slavishly did English high fashion ape Beau that when he stopped wearing diamond buttons, diamond button manufacturing ended as a business.

Diamonds never really recovered from the unnerving guillotine and the uncompromising Beau Brummell. And soon—ladies knowing a good thing when they saw it—diamonds blossomed forth all over the female anatomy: on watch fobs (worn suspended from girdles), necklaces, rings, shoe buckles and bosom buttons (of particular interest to men, these small diamond chips, engineered to prevent tight bodices from popping, withstood great pressures). A last stand was made around the diamond stickpin.

"You can always give a man a stickpin," Tiffany's, posh New York jewelers, correctly noted in its 1890 catalog. Men's pent-up desire for diamonds found expression in stickpins well into the 20th Century. A well-known fashion leader of the 1920s, Dr. Charles Evans of Philadelphia and Paris, for example, was credited with having one of the largest collection—twenty-three (most being gifts from the Czar of Russia, Napoleon III and King Leopold of Belgium; he was their dentist).

There was the hope that the stickpin might spearhead a diamond revival. Unfortunately, it struck the fancy of politicians, mostly down-at-the-ward-heelers and grafters and its usefulness was considerably blunted. Today the stickpin is as rare in masculine wardrobes as the aigrette.

At some later date, when gemologists study our civilization, the judgment will be we lived in a Dark Age as far as diamonds are concerned. That men still yearn for diamonds has been clearly demonstrated by—of all people—DeBeers. Just before the start of World War II, the monopoly test-marketed what they called "brown diamonds" for men. So enthusiastic was male response that demand quickly outraced supply. The war snuffed out the promotion, however, and DeBeers never gave men a second chance.

When the Renaissance comes—and what man doubts he will once again gain the upper hand?—it will be necessary to completely overhaul our thinking about diamonds. For the most marked characteristic

of this Dark Age is the growth of a new and alarming irresponsibility towards the gem. It can be seen every day in the contemporary men who doggedly wear them. Where our father's fathers *knew* of the responsibilities of diamond ownership from their fathers, we can expect no help from that source.

What are the responsibilities? Through the ages they have never varied: a diamond owner must learn how to protect his diamond from abuse and himself from the abuse of non-diamond owners.

A sign in the workrooms of Van Moppes & Zoon, one of the largest diamond finishing plants in Amsterdam, reads, "Diamonds are a stable investment."

Even though there is no mistaking the fiscal meaning of that statement, most men do. Remembering only that diamonds are durable, they handle their gems as if they lived in stables. Unfortunately, diamonds get dirty.

The only sure way to keep these bits of carbon (organically, a diamond is similar to coal, lampblack and graphite) clean, according to Van Moppes, is not to wear them. For natural skin oils attract dust and are the cause of unsightly, dull diamonds. At one time paleness of a diamond was thought to be a sign of infidelity ("One day he looked his ring upon. He saw the diamond pale and wan" an old English ballad runs. Promptly the diamond-owner in the song ran to his home where he discovered his wife and the village printer making headlines). But today it is the sign of a slob.

Even as diamond owners are learning that diamonds get dirty, still others will be learning that diamonds are breakable. A freak accident in a gin rummy game recently illustrated this point.

A gentleman wearing a 3.5-carat ring knocked with five points one night, only to discover to his horror that his diamond had split in two. The stone sat in its mounting looking moodily Siamese as the other players worked to revive the stunned card player. The moral: nature's toughest nut to crack (a steel saw is worn away trying to cut through a diamond, which is ninety times harder than its next hardest rivals, the corundum gems, ruby and sapphire), a diamond still takes hard knocks badly.

"Diamonds break along flaw lines," Bernard de Haan, chief diamond cutter for the firm of Harry Winston in New York, explained. "Often they can barely be seen even

under ten-power magnification. If you are unlucky enough to hit a flaw on the head, poof! The diamond cleaves."

Because of their more active lives, male diamond wearers must take special precautions against cleavage. They shouldn't, for example, crack walnuts with their diamonds, nor punch timeclocks. Ring fingers should also be kept out of the way while opening champagne bottles.

Diamond owners with more than one diamond face another pitfall. Just as the Cabots spoke only to the Lodges, so a diamond, in a sense, speaks only to another diamond. When this happens, they invariably rub each other the wrong way, causing scratches. Fling your diamond into a sock drawer or jewel box with other diamonds and it will look like it.

Still another form of abuse is subjecting a diamond to extremes in temperatures. Temperature can intensify unseen flaws in diamonds—or worse.

"Heat a diamond hot enough in the presence of air and it will disappear as a colorless gas, carbon dioxide," George S. Switzer, Curator of Mineralogy at the Smithsonian Institute in Washington recently testified. While that trick would be an interesting one to pull on an insurance company, the heat needed is out of the range of most owners (approximately 900 degrees). To be

safe, rings should be kept out of fireplaces, Turkish and Finnish baths, coffee cups and the hot sun. Cold weather is less likely to trouble diamond owners. They can always put their hands in their pockets.

The height of irresponsibility, of course, is losing one's diamond. Just how alert a diamond owner must be is readily seen in the case of a fighting cock owner in Jacksonville, Fla. While preparing his bird for a fight one night, the bird pecked at the owner's hand, swallowing the diamond. The bird never did get to fight that night; his owner chloroformed him to insure speedy recovery of the lost gem.

Protecting the diamond from the abuse of the possessor is only half as hard as protecting the diamond owner from the abuse of others. It comes in at least four varieties.

A young doctor from St. Louis recently took the diamond buyer at Black Starr & Gorham, on New York's Fifth Avenue, aside. "Look, I'd love to buy a diamond. But if I wore a diamond in my practice, people would stop paying their bills. I might just as well drive a Ferrari on house calls."

That's commercial abuse.

"When I go out with a girl, she thinks that just because I have a diamond ring, I'm a millionaire," a young man from Sewickley, Pa., complained re-

cently. "My diamond cost me \$550, half as much as some guys spend on hi-fi rigs. Does a hi-fi rig a millionaire make?"

That's social abuse.

"Whenever I wore my diamond, people asked me why I wasn't out at Fair Grounds," a New Orleans diamond wearer remarked recently. "That's ridiculous. I like an occasional day at the race track, sure. But I liked it long before I could afford this ring."

That's sporting abuse.

And then there is status abuse. "You mean you're letting him wear that ring, Ethel?" a neighbor asked a young suburban housewife. "But my dear didn't you know that only pimps, gamblers and grafting politicians wear diamonds today?"

Abused by stereotypes continually, men of good taste understandably turn away from diamonds. As a substitute, many buy what Kenneth van Atten, jewelry buyer at Black Starr & Gorham recommends for the diffident: cat's-eyes—a semi-precious quartz crystal that makes a smart ring for men who ordinarily would wear diamonds.

How long will cat's-eyes be man's best friends? The answer may very well hinge on which sex wears the pants in the second half of the 20th Century. □

So you want a diamond? Go dig for it!

A JEWELRY STORE isn't the only place in the U.S. where a man can find diamonds. Murfreesboro, Ark., is the other place. For that reason, Murfreesboro, a sleepy town in the foothills of the attractive—for goats—Ouachita Mountains in the southwestern end of the state, is a Mecca.

And, the folks around Murfreesboro are willing to share their largesse with anybody, too.

In 1958, more than 40,000 do-it-yourselfers were the guests of a single enterprising land-holder. For \$1.50 a head they dug at the establishment called "Diamond Crater" (actually the 73 acres of rocky land resembles a football field more than a crater) until their shins barked and their backs swayed.

Finders keepers? Right—with the proviso that if the find scales more than five carats uncut the owner of the land is entitled to a 25 per cent cut. Howard A. Millar, the owner, also runs

a souvenir shop, snack bar and museum to minister to the needs of diamond-worshippers.

If there are diamonds in "Diamond Crater," why doesn't Mr. Miller himself get out there and dig instead of sitting on his front porch? Frankly, serious diamond mining is hard work.

To get 1/142 ounces (the weight of one carat), for example, the Premier Mine in the heart of the South African diamond belt estimates some 6,000 lbs. of worthless rock must be excavated. That's like digging up a backyard with a steamshovel to find a button. They do it in South Africa because there are enough carats under ground to make a rabbit happy. The diamond vein in Murfreesboro excites no such confidence.

The first diamond was discovered there in 1906. Since then numerous corporations and individuals have tried to exploit the only known deposit in North America. The last commercial

mine closed in 1949. The bonanza's yield that year: 246 carats of industrial diamonds worth \$985. That's why Murfreesboro gentry have turned to exploiting tourists.

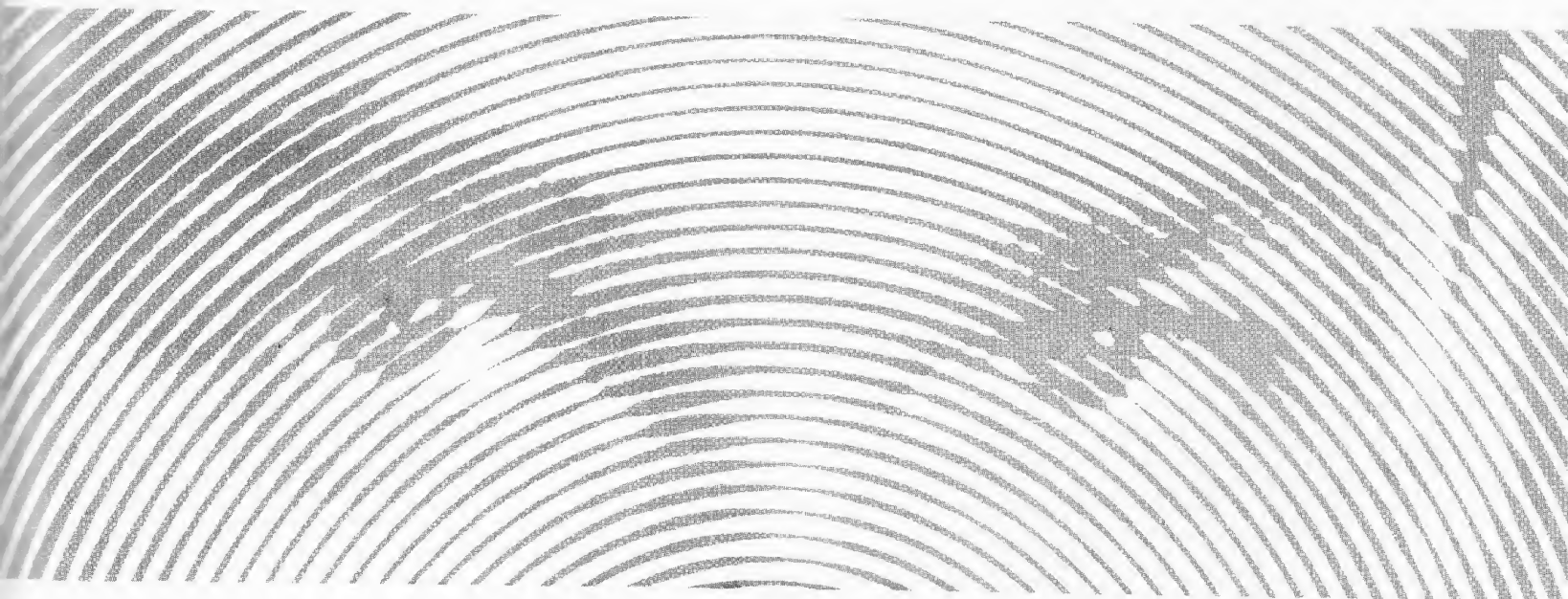
All in all, 125 stones were uncovered at "Diamond Crater" in 1958, according to Mr. Millar, most of them Sen Sen-sized or smaller. What keeps the diamond diggers coming (50,000 are expected to check in at "Diamond Crater" alone in 1959) is the one significant gem a Texas woman picked up in 1956—the 15.3 carat "Star of Arkansas." The Star was assayed at \$15,000—Mr. Millar collected \$3,750 on the lucky find—but is now valued at \$75,000.

Murfreesboro's diggers use a variety of equipment. One regular digger (every vacation) packs only a tweezer and lunch. You don't even need money to dig for diamonds. This year "Diamond Crater" is accepting credit cards for the first time. □



Eye openers for after hours: two festive-looking ideas from the Ba Ma, a Nassau dining and drinking spot. On the left, a Suffern Barstuart. In a tall shaker, add the following ingredients in order listed: $\frac{1}{2}$ fresh lime juice, 1 spoonfull of sugar, $\frac{1}{3}$ Dry Vermouth, $\frac{1}{3}$ gin, $\frac{1}{3}$ pineapple juice, 3 dashes Grenadine; pour in a frosted glass. On the following page: Pink Ink. Use the juice of $\frac{1}{2}$ fresh lime; $\frac{1}{4}$ each of Grenadine, port wine, light Jamaica rum, pineapple juice.





OVER MATTRESS

A famous comedian comments on a laughing matter

By Henny Youngman

THE DOCTOR told me I have insomnia. Also, I can't sleep. Some people fall asleep at the drop of a second, but not me. If I got three hours sleep on any given night, I'd die of sleeping sickness. I've tried everything to induce sleep, even to counting my creditors. I once heard that some people put boards under the mattress—it's supposed to ease your back and induce sleep. I've gone ever farther; I tried sleeping directly on the boards, but those park benches can get awfully cold. I even tried drinking bourbon during the night . . . it didn't put me to sleep but made it pleasanter to stay awake.

The doctor told me not to take my daytime problems to bed with me, but my wife refuses to sleep anywhere else . . . She's afraid I might talk in my sleep and she'd miss something. Now you take my wife—if you only would—she claims she doesn't sleep either, except that she falls asleep during the Early Early show, with the TV going full blast, and although it takes ten minutes to wake her, she claims she was only resting her eyes.

You should see her get ready for bed. I mean to sleep, of course. What a production! I could charge admission. She puts plugs in her ears, a shade over her eyes, takes six sleeping pills, turns on music to sleep by and even uses a nightcap—which she finishes in one gulp. She's asleep before you can say "Sandman." And does she snore? Boy! She has one of those snores with a whistle on its end, a high whistle, and loud; just to give you an idea, one night she had the air-raid wardens out twice!

She keeps the guys that sell "sleep gadgets" in business. Last week she went out and bought a new thing, a push-button bed! You push a button and the bed goes up and down by itself. Fine thing, just when I'm growing old and need the exercise. And eye shades! She's got about fifty different kinds . . . some with messages on them; one says, "I do love you," another says, "Maybe, dear," another one says, "Intermission," another says, "Be Fair, my Fair Lady." And I found one that said, "It's either you or Morpheus." I'm going to locate that Greek if it's the last thing I do.

She bought a dozen pillows, also with all kinds of writing on them. One says, "Can't we be friends?" Another one says, "Yes!" Another says, "No!"

We don't converse in bed anymore, I have to read the pillows to find out what she wants. One night instead of putting the "Yes!" pillow in my place, she gave me the "No!" pillow. I don't know from nothing and went to sleep. In a little while she woke me up and put the "Yes!" pillow in its place, so I showed her the pillow that reads, "Not tonight, Josephine!" and went back to sleep. But not for long. She woke me up again and showed me a pillow that said, "I'm going home to mother." So I got up and started the car for her.

Although we've been married nine years, since she started with the sleeping gadgets we've had very little conversation. To be exact, in all that time I have only spoken to her twice in bed, but when we got the divorce, the judge gave her custody of the two children. □

NO VACANCIES

He had to be guilty. He had the motive, the temper, the opportunity

By Craig Rice

IT HAD BEEN a particularly brutal and senseless crime, and ordinarily John J. Malone would have given it only a brief glance before turning the pages of his Herald-Examiner to the West Coast race results. But something had caught his attention and held it for the past two or three days. Perhaps it was that the suspected murderer was still at large, and that Malone felt an instinctive sympathy for the hunted man.

This hot July morning had brought no new developments. The little lawyer sighed, tossed the paper inaccurately at the wastebasket and leaned back in his chair. The suspected murderer would probably and eventually give himself up to some incredulous but grateful city editor. Malone yawned and thought idly about the case.

The victim, Inez McGlintchy, had, apparently, been as brutal and senseless as the crime which had ended her more-or-less pointless existence. Though the newspapers described her as an attractive young society matron, actually she had been in her mid-thirties, with the kind of red hair that is often accompanied by a pale, freckled and generally poor complexion, slightly myopic light blue eyes and an inclination to plumpness. Moderately wealthy and very spoiled.

Bob McGlintchy, the hunted man, had been her fourth husband. According to a rather fuzzy snapshot reproduced in the newspapers, he was tall and broad-shouldered, with an amiable, not too bright face and a lot of fluffy-looking hair. He was described as twenty-four, an ex-football hero, and neurotic. A neurotic football player, Malone decided, was something he had to see.

The McGlintchys, still in their first year of marriage, had travelled with what seemed to be a fairly unsavory crowd of second-rate artists, musicians, poets and hangers-on. A few of the more lurid newspapers had ventured enthusiastically, if occasionally inaccurately, into the darker depths of abnormal psychology. But the facts of the murder, as divulged so far, were simple.

Bob and Inez McGlintchy had quarrelled, loudly and drunkenly, at a loud and drunken party. That was nothing new. Inez, after a particularly nasty thrust, had gone home to the apartment they had recently rented. That also was nothing new.

Malone winced uncomfortably at the address of the apartment. It had been the starting point for what had been one of his rare but, in this case, conspicuous failures.

The violently angry young husband had followed a few minutes later, it apparently having taken a little time for him to think of a suitable retort. Not long after, occupants of the apartment building had been roused by a scream, a scuffle, and the sound of a crashing blow. The superintendent had been called and had

rushed to the half-open door to see the football hero standing over the body of his wife, whose skull had been crushed by a heavy statuette that had been one of a pair on the mantelpiece. By the time the thoroughly frightened superintendent had called the police, and by the time they had arrived, Bob McGlintchy had prudently vanished. And there the matter rested.

It was still resting there a few hours later, as far as Malone was concerned, when the phone rang and Maggie came in from the outer office to announce that the man on the phone refused to give his name. The expression on her face indicated that the caller was probably an indignant creditor.

"Malone," a hoarse voice said, "can you come here right away?"

"I can," Malone said amiably, "but why?"

"It's murder," came the voice. "I don't know just what to do." It added, "I'm in Connelly's bar on upper State Street."

Malone knew where it was. "Buy a drink," he said, "and don't do anything else until I get there. By the way," he said as an afterthought, "who are you?"

"Why, I'm Bob McGlintchy." The voice sounded as though Malone should have known.

The little lawyer swore softly. "Buy two drinks. And stay right there."

Well, he'd wanted a look at a neurotic football hero. Possibly, he thought a little uneasily, this one was also a homicidal maniac.

He looked a little like one at the moment, Malone decided as he slid into the booth and ordered rye. Bob McGlintchy was a big man and probably a handsome one, far more so than the newspaper snapshot had indicated. But at this moment his light brown hair was mussed and matted, his almost boyish face was haggard and showed a good three-day growth of beard. His eyes were red-rimmed, his tieless shirt was dirty and his expensive suit had been slept in.

"This is the damndest mess," he understated without preface. "I thought and thought what I'd better do, and finally I remembered reading your name. So I telephoned you. I don't know why I was so sure you wouldn't call the cops, but I was." He drew a long, shaky breath.

"Where have you been hiding?" Malone asked very gently.

"In a—a kind of a hotel on West Madison Street. I didn't dare go out to eat. Then my money was running out. I just started walking. Nobody seemed to recognize me. Somehow I got up here. I had just enough money left to buy a couple of beers and to telephone you." He paused. "I don't know how I'm going to pay you."

Malone almost said that he didn't either. "We'll worry

about that later." He went on: "Right now you're all wound up. Drink your drink. And unwind. Run down."

The young man tried to grin. It wasn't an outstanding success. Malone lit a cigar, taking his time about it. He didn't like to think about those three days in a West Madison Street hotel room.

"Malone," Bob McGlintchy said shakily, "I didn't."

"I didn't think you did," Malone said, nodding; "it's my business to believe you. But what did happen?"

"I don't know. It's all mixed up." He blinked and gave his head a quick shake as though to bring his thoughts into focus.

This, Malone realized, was going to take a little time. "Start from page one. How did you happen to marry her in the first place?"

"I—she sort of suggested it, I guess. We met last year. I'd had a couple of offers to turn pro. You see, I haven't any money. But what I wanted to do was get a job as a high school coach. Only I met Inez. We sort of got to going around together. It wasn't the kind of life I'd been used to, and I guess I sort of got to like it. But she didn't want me to be a coach in a high school."

"What did she want you to do?" Malone asked.

"Well, I guess, nothing much, except be around her. It was all right for a while, but we got to fighting about stuff and things. We fought a lot, all the time. I guess I got mad awful easy, and she could say real mean things. Like my not having any money. You know. I hauled off and hit her a couple of times. But nobody knows about that except she and—I mean—except me." He stopped suddenly.

"And now, me," Malone said helpfully. He signalled to the bartender. "About this last quarrel, now—"

Bob McGlintchy felt in his pocket and started to shake his head. Malone hastily laid a dollar bill on the bar and held up two fingers.

"Thanks, Malone." He gulped his drink. A little color began to come back in his face. He pushed back his hair with both hands. "We went to this party. We'd been fighting all that day and we just kept it up. Then she blew up and went home. I stuck around a few minutes and then I decided to go home myself and go on with the fight. When I got there—" He fumbled for a cigarette and managed to light it on the third try.

"Slow down," Malone said. "This is the important part."

"I—she was dead." His breath caught for a moment. "I mean she looked dead." He stopped again. "I unlocked the door and went in."

"The door was locked?" Malone asked.

Bob McGlintchy nodded. "I went in," he repeated. "She was on the floor. Dead. She looked just like she did in the newspaper picture. And then someone pushed past me and went out the door fast."

"Hold on," Malone said. "Someone. Man or woman?"

"A woman, I think. I didn't get much of a look at her. I was looking at—Inez. But I think she had on something gray. And something over her head. A scarf, maybe. She was gone so quick. Like a shadow."

There was silence. "What did you do?" Malone said at last.

"I just stood there. Then someone came to the door."

"The superintendent?" Malone said.

Bob McGlintchy nodded again. "So the newspapers said. I didn't really see him. I just knew someone was there. So I ran." He drew a long, sighing breath. "I knew right away they'd think I killed her. So I ran. And here I am."

"Exactly what they do think," Malone said, scowling. He looked gloomily at the end of his cigar. "I'm your

lawyer, and I believe you. But you've got to admit it's a damned flimsy story." He began moving his glass on the polished surface of the bar in a series of little circles. "You'd been quarreling. Violently. It had happened before and you'd struck her. Though thank goodness no one ever needs to know that. But even so—" He picked up the glass and stared at it moodily. "A gray shadow. A jury will love that."

He looked up at his new client. The unshaven face was the color of old newsprint; the big hands were behaving like leaves in a high wind.

"But it's all the truth, Malone. What am I going to do?" His voice almost cracked.

The newspaper description of a neurotic football player was fairly accurate, Malone decided. "First, we go to the cops." He added hastily, "Now wait a minute, and don't jump like that; it makes me nervous." He paused and chewed savagely on his cigar. "One of two things are true. First, that you're telling me the truth. That's the theory we're going on. In that case, whoever murdered your wife undoubtedly doesn't know that you didn't get a good look. Or there may be some reason for getting rid of both of you. Who inherits her dough?"

"I don't know. Is it important?"

"It could be." Malone made a mental note to find out, for more than one reason. "What I'm trying to get across is that whoever murdered your wife may need to murder you, too, and you'd be safe in jail."

The neurotic football player frowned. "I can defend myself," he said stiffly.

"Against a gray shadow?" the lawyer said mildly. "Anyway, I'll feel better with you safe in jail. And you can't go on hiding in flophouses forever."

"I suppose you're right," Bob McGlintchy said. "But Malone, suppose—"

"Suppose nothing," Malone said. His voice was almost cross. "I'm your lawyer and you do as I tell you. Since we're going on the assumption that you're telling the truth, I can do a better job of gray-shadowing if I have you tucked away out of harm's reach. And once I can turn that shadow into reality, your troubles will all be over."

There was another unsuccessful attempt at a grin. "And suppose you can't?"

"Then," Malone said, "you just don't remember what happened and leave the rest to me. Don't worry," he added heartily, "I've never lost a client yet."

Except, he thought, Big Joe Williams. He found himself wishing that it wasn't the same apartment. Not, of course, that he was superstitious. But it gave him an uncomfortable feeling just the same. He crushed out his cigar almost angrily.

"Something wrong?" Bob McGlintchy asked anxiously.

The little lawyer said, "Yes. A shave, a new shirt, a necktie, a quick pressing job, a bath, and a lot of food. For you. Before we go to the cops. The next stop is my hotel." He finished his drink and stood up.

"But," his client said, giving him a worried look. "But the people at your hotel."

"I've lived there twenty years," Malone reassured him, "and they're used to anything. Besides," he added, "there's a freight elevator in the rear."

* * *

The Bob McGlintchy who sat in the office of Inspector von Flannagan of Homicide, several hours later, was distinctly different in appearance if not in state of mind. The freshly shaven face was definitely boyish, but wore a serious look. (Continued on page 59)





RON VOGEL

ROUTINE MATTER

Friends weren't a bit surprised when Jamie O'Neil, the winsome blonde decorating these pages, was a big success in her television debut. Success with Jamie is getting to be a routine matter. A Los Angeleno for the past three years, she is studying voice and hopes to be a hit one of these days in the pop field. There's nothing routine, however, about Jamie's good looks. She's twenty-three, blue-eyed, and a nifty 36-23½-35½; two other rather routine bits of information we've been able to gather about Jamie: she likes intelligent guys, and she's nuts about the L.A. Dodgers.







"Land's sake, Ella, look at this girl! She's got the largest pair of . . .



trained frogs I've ever seen!"

The Sulka tic, one of Malone's own, added an almost courageous touch.

"Damn you, Malone," von Flanagan said, "you always make things hard for me. I never wanted to be a cop. Never would have been, if the alderman hadn't owed my old man dough. Then I never wanted to be promoted to this job." He scowled at Malone, who had heard the story before, and many times. "Here's a nice simple murder like I can understand, guy gets drunk, gets mad at his wife, and bashes her head in. Excuse me." This last to the pale Bob McGlintchy. "Then you come to the party, Malone, and right away I don't feel good." He glared impartially at them both.

"For the record," Malone said, reaching for a fresh cigar, "my client did quarrel with his wife, but he did not bash her head in, as you put it."

The big red-faced police officer looked at Malone with suspicion. "Who did?"

"A gray shadow," Malone said in his most innocent voice.

Von Flanagan swore enthusiastically and fervently for several minutes. At last he added, "Nothing personal, y'understand," to Bob McGlintchy.

"But I did see it—" Bob McGlintchy began in protest.

"Shut up," Malone told him amiably. "And stay shut up. Any talking to be done, I'll do it." He turned to von Flanagan and briefly outlined what his client had done and seen, omitting the matter of the previous quarrels.

"No more story than that," von Flanagan said in an almost awed tone, "and you bring him in. You must have been expecting a bounty."

"I saw it as my duty to my client," Malone said smugly.

Von Flanagan remarked something almost unnecessarily profane about Malone's sense of duty. Malone ignored him and turned to the anxious young man. "That's your statement and stick to it. Don't talk to anybody even if I'm present. I'll see to it you have cigarettes, candy, magazines and all the comforts of home. And don't worry." He wished he felt as confident as he sounded.

Later, alone with von Flanagan, he said "You haven't such an air-tight case as you think. A quarrel. One witness who says he saw McGlintchy standing over his wife's body. It's not enough."

"It is for me," von Flanagan said, trying to act as though he meant it.

Malone finally got his cigar lighted. "I suppose you have his fingerprints on the statuette," he said idly, shooting in the dark.

Von Flanagan started to say, "Of course," thought better of it, and growled. "The only fingerprints on the statuette belonged to the maid. Doesn't mean a thing."

The little lawyer strolled to the window and gazed out at the traffic. "One of the hottest Julys in the history of the weather bureau," he remarked, apparently to himself, "and I'm asked to believe that the guy wore gloves. Or that, being in a violent and drunken rage, he carefully donned gloves before picking up the lethal weapon. Or that, being in said violent and drunken rage, he later wiped off the lethal weapon so carefully that he did not disturb the fingerprints left there by the maid."

"Stop rehearsing for a jury in my office, damn you," von Flanagan said angrily. "I said, the fingerprints don't mean a thing."

"A violent, murderous, drunken rage," Malone mused, "the kind of rage that would drive a man to batter his victim with cruel, almost maniacal blows. How many blows were actually struck, von Flanagan?"

"Only one," von Flanagan said before he had time to think. He caught himself. His red face turned almost purple. "And I suppose that if you can't think of anything else, you'll have him tell the jury that everything went black."

"Black as the bottom of a coal mine on a rainy Friday," Malone said cheerfully and went out.

Out in the streets he began thinking about the apartment on Goethe Street and on a sudden impulse decided to visit it. He hailed a passing cab and rode up Michigan Avenue through the steaming heat that had already turned his Finchley suit into something resembling a damp accordion. He mopped his brow, ran his fingers through his damp black hair and made an ineffectual attempt to straighten his tie, which was already slowly creeping toward his left ear.

The apartment building was small and chastely expensive in appearance, boasting a small square of lawn whose cash value as real estate was probably approximately that of its equivalent per square foot of platinum.

Big Joe Williams had lived comfortably and lavishly, going forth to restaurants, nightclubs, theaters and race tracks, while the police of forty-eight states and the FBI searched for him diligently. Here he, Malone, had sat over many a long cool drink while his client cheerfully refused to say anything one way or another about the fifty thousand dollar robbery of the Hamil-

ton Trust and Savings Bank. And here Big Joe Williams had surrendered, politely and still cheerfully, to the police after someone had turned him in. Malone sighed.

If Big Joe Williams had only confided the hiding place of the loot, he might be living here today, and Malone might be coming on a more pleasant errand. But that had been long ago, and Big Joe Williams was still serving his stretch.

The little lawyer shook his head sadly and pushed the bell marked Superintendent.

The superintendent, a skinny, pallid little man, came to the door scratching his long, thin neck. "I guess it'll be all right, Mr. Malone," he said in answer to Malone's question, "if the new tenants don't mind."

Malone lifted a surprised eyebrow. "Rented so soon?"

The small man nodded. "Apartments are awful hard to get these days, and this one's real nice. Elegant furniture. Oh sure, of course, you remember. Haven't changed one thing. Rents on a month-to-month basis. Real nice young couple took it, day after the killing. Seems they read about it in the newspaper." He accepted a cigar and said. "Thanks, Malone. Oh, they kept a couple cops hanging around, just in case the killer came back, but they took 'em away just a little while ago."

Malone thanked him and knocked on the door of 1-B. It was opened a few seconds later, and the superintendent said, "Mrs. Atwater, this is Mr. Malone. Lawyer. Real nice friend of mine. Just wants to look around the place where the killing happened."

"Come on in," the woman said agreeably to Malone. The superintendent gave a last curious, half-wistful look into the apartment and went away, closing the door behind him.

Malone looked around reminiscently. Yes, not a thing had been changed. The pleasant creamy yellow walls had undoubtedly been repainted, but in exactly the same shade; the comfortable chairs might have been recovered, but in the same pale green brocade. Even the little ornaments were the same, the pleasant-faced red-and-gold painted Hindu God sitting in an uncomfortable position on the desk, the odd-shaped vases on the bookcase. Nothing had even been moved, from the appearance of things, since Malone had last seen it more than three years ago.

But suddenly he realized that there was one difference. There was only one bronze statuette on the mantelpiece. There had been two.

Mrs. Atwater's eyes followed his. She laughed. "That super—he kills me—apologized all over the place about that

damn statue. Seems the cops took it for evidence. He says he expects to get it back sometime."

The little lawyer looked at her curiously. She was a smallish woman, thin and very pale. Thin, but not bony, Malone observed admiringly. Her lacy off-the-shoulder blouse showed a lot of creamy skin that looked as if it would be smooth to the touch. Her fluffy hair was a glistening black, her mascaraed eyes were a kind of blue and green and gray all at one time, her full mouth was lipstickied a brilliant scarlet. She seemed restless, quick-moving, and nervous as a rabbit near a dog track.

"Sit down, won't you? Ted, let's make a drink."

Ted Atwater shoved the morning paper from his lap and stood up lazily. He was a tall limp man, with a pleasant, homely face, brown hair, and friendly brown eyes. He yawned, stretched and grinned apologetically. "Day off," he explained. "Supposed to still be getting moved. Though all we moved were a bunch of suitcases. I'd been living in a club, and Edna here didn't even own a pair of guest towels." He moved slowly off to the pantry.

"Newlyweds?" Malone asked politely, making himself comfortable and reaching for a fresh cigar.

She nodded. "Three weeks. Been living in a hotel. Don't know what we'd have done if this McGlitchy guy hadn't bumped off his wife."

"Minute Edna read about it in the paper she said we'd better come right up, there'd be an apartment vacant," Ted Atwater called through the open door. He came back carrying a pleasantly tinkling tray. Malone recognized it and the decorated glasses. "Anything in particular you wanted to look at?"

Malone shook his head, accepted a drink, and said, "No, just wanted to get a quick look at the scene."

"Well, it's just the same," Edna Atwater said brightly. "The body was right down there. But I guess you saw the newspaper pictures. The McGlitchys had a little personal junk scattered around, but the super took it out. And the old lady who lived here before they did had a lot of stuff and had it arranged different, but it was all changed back."

"What do you think'll happen to the guy?" Ted Atwater asked, turning his glass around between his palms.

Malone shrugged his shoulders non-committally. "The police have him. I'm his lawyer. But that's about all I can tell you."

The woman lifted her eyebrows interestedly. "Well, I wish him luck. And you too. She must have been a bitch."

The little lawyer nodded. The apartment didn't tell him a thing. There was the mantelpiece where the statuette had been, there was the place on the raisin-colored carpet where the body had lain, still showing a very faint trace of police chalk-marks, and there was the door through which a gray shadow had flitted to disappear, perhaps forever. If it had ever been there at all. Malone felt a little unhappy, and for the first time that week stopped noticing the July heat wave.

"You're a lawyer," Atwater said suddenly; "perhaps you can help us out. I want to move out of this place, and we've paid two months' rent in advance. Do you think we can get it back?"

"Ted!" she said reprovingly. "We'll never find another place as nice."

Malone looked from one to the other and decided to stay neutral. He looked at Atwater and said "Why?"

"Just something about it." He laughed nervously. "It seemed a little ghoulish to me anyway, running up here the minute Edna read about the killing, and taking the place while it was still warm, if you know what I mean. And somehow it doesn't feel right. We come in and there's a feeling like somebody's been here, and the super swears there hasn't." He drank deeply and went on: "I keep thinking there's a jinx. First there was a bank robber here, and he went to jail. Then there was a bed-ridden old lady, and she died here. And then this guy murders his wife. I just don't like it here."

"You're silly," his wife said.

"For instance," he said, ignoring her, "I came in and found the furniture had all been moved around differently. Oh, it looked all right, so we left it that way. But the super swore he—or anybody else—hadn't been in here."

Malone twirled his glass thoughtfully. "I don't know. Maybe you could get your rent back, and maybe you couldn't. And as far as the other is concerned—" he managed to speak lightly in spite of the ice-cube that seemed to be sliding up and down his spine, and forced a smile—"as a lawyer, I've been called on for a lot of things, but I've never been retained to evict a ghost."

Edna Atwater laughed. It was a thin, half-irritated laugh. "You see, Ted? You'll make yourself sound half gone, talking like you do."

But Ted Atwater didn't smile. He said stubbornly, "Well, I just don't like it, that's all. I'm not a lawyer. I'm just a bank cashier—Hamilton Trust—but I bet I could get that rent paid back if I tried."

"You'd better not," his wife said almost grimly.

Malone decided it was time to go. He finished his drink, rose, and said, "Thanks for the drink and for letting me in. And I hope you get rid of the haunts."

He hoped he could get rid of some of his own, he thought on the way back to the office. The cold chill was still with him, not a haunting of past robbery, death and murder, but a premonition of something very definitely unpleasant that was going to happen in the future. All the more unpleasant because he didn't know what it was.

Back at the office his dark mood persisted. It didn't help that Ted Atwater was a cashier at the Hamilton Trust and Savings Bank. Pure coincidence, of course. It had to be. Coincidence and nothing else that he had moved into the apartment that had been lived in by Big Joe Williams. He sighed and tried to concentrate on gray shadows and their probable whereabouts.

It didn't make him feel any better when Maggie came in from the outer office and said, "Well, what?"

"Is it the rent again?" Malone asked unhappily.

"Due on the first," Maggie said, "and so is my salary. And there's a bill from Saks for twelve pairs of nylons and some French perfume. And the guy who runs the newsstand called to say he'd sent a carton of cigarettes, a dozen candy bars and all the new magazines to Robert McGlitchy in the jail, and would you be sure to stop by and pay him this afternoon."

Malone went through his pockets, dug out an accumulation of wrinkled bills, all ones, and a handful of change. "I can make it."

"Malone." She seemed to soften a little. "Did he do it? Are you going to get him off?"

"I hope not," Malone said, "and I hope I do."

Maggie said, "Well, you'd better. Because he hasn't any money of his own, and he won't inherit his wife's if he's convicted of her murder."

"I know it," Malone said. "I wish you'd go away."

"And one more thing, Malone—"

The telephone interrupted her. She lifted it, said, "Yes," and handed it to Malone. "A Mrs. Atwater."

A lilting voice said, "Mr. Malone, I'm around the corner in Henici's. Will you come down and have a drink with me?"

"I'm as good as there," Malone said. He scooped the money into his pocket and said, "I'll take care of the newsstand later. Now don't worry about a thing."

In the soft light of Henici's, Edna Atwater seemed a shade less restless.

(Continued on page 62)



"I'm glad you're going to strengthen my will . . . he's exhausted!"

She had changed into something very cool and simple, of a dull rose color, and redone her lips to match. She smiled warmly at Malone as he sat down.

One daiquiri and a little light conversation later, she said, "I hope Ted can be talked out of that notion of moving. I do like the place, in spite of how we got it. But he'll come around."

Malone had a quiet idea that she could talk any reasonably susceptible male into anything. "He probably will."

"After you left I had a sudden wild idea. Maybe that bank robber hid his money in the apartment. Do you suppose I could find it? Is there still a reward out for it?"

"There still is," Malone said, "but the police really took that apartment to pieces searching." He didn't add that he'd done the same. "And no doubt the other tenants had the same idea."

"Even the bed-ridden old lady?"

"She had a nurse and a maid," Malone said. He remembered the nurse. A slight gorgeous blonde named Irene. It suddenly occurred to him that he ought to look her up, strictly in the interest of his client.

Edna Atwater smiled, and her eyes said that she liked him very much. "You were his lawyer, weren't you? Haven't even you any idea where he hid it?"

Malone smiled back at her and felt a sudden pang of envy for Ted Atwater. "Not the least idea." He suddenly decided the hell with Ted Atwater, signalled the waiter, and said "Enough of all that. Let's talk about you."

He left, just a little happier when he got back to the office. But, he reminded himself, he was no nearer to a solution of Bob McGlintchy's pressing problem. He made a note to call the blonde Irene, firmly put Edna Atwater's gray-blue-green eyes out of his mind, and settled down to work.

It was mid-afternoon when he sat back and realized that he still was getting no nearer. The murdered woman had had a host of mostly chiselling acquaintances, no close friends, no lovers or ex-lovers, and three ex-husbands scattered in different parts of the country. No one in her life could even remotely be described as a gray shadow. There simply was no motive at all except for the now famous violent and drunken rage. The little lawyer sighed, and sent a message to his client that everything was fine and he was not to worry.

He prowled about the office restlessly and gloomily. He opened the file marked "Confidential," took out the half-empty bottle of gin, looked at it and put it back again. He straightened

the window blind. He picked up the cigar box from the bookcase where Maggie had inadvertently left it while dusting and put it back on the desk where it belonged. He stood still, thinking.

Suddenly he called Maggie and said, "Get me a round trip airline ticket to Joliet."

"But Malone—"

"I'm going to see Big Joe Williams."

"But Malone, what money—"

"There's an emergency fund," he told her. "This may be one."

While he waited he called up Irene and made a date for dinner. "I may be late," he warned her. Also, he reflected, he might be broke. He made a few other calls, and hoped that he'd find Big Joe Williams in a receptive mood.

The bank robber was receptive and amiable. Three years had changed him very little. He was still a big, paunchy man with thinning gray hair and a friendly smile. He was delighted to see Malone.

"I'm up for parole," he greeted the lawyer.

"You may be out sooner than you think," Malone told him.

"Same deal?"

"Same deal."

"Maybe I'll buy this time." He frowned thoughtfully. "First, I figured I was earning the fifty grand. Earning it the hard way, but even looking at it as so much a year, it wasn't too bad. But I'm getting bored."

Malone nodded.

"Besides, there's my girl. Bonnie. Remember her, Malone?"

He remembered her vaguely from one or two occasions. A rather loud, brassy blonde. "You mean to say you're still thinking about her, after all this time?"

"I sure as hell am," Big Joe said. "She turned me in."

Malone looked his surprise and said nothing.

"Should have seen it coming," the big man said. "Never did trust her, but we got along. Then she got sore about something and turned me in. Well, how do we work it, Malone?"

"Same setup," Malone said. "Just tell me where the money is and I'll do the rest. And I'll do it fast."

Big Joe Williams sighed, shook his head sadly and said, "For a character who's just about to kiss fifty grand goodbye, I feel pretty good." He grinned. "I bet that apartment really got a going over."

"That, and every other place you'd ever been since the hold-up," Malone told him.

The grin became a laugh. "As if I'd let that much dough kick around loose. With everybody and his second cousin

looking for it. And a reward for its return in case any honest citizens got into the act."

"Where is it?" Malone demanded.

"In a safety deposit box," Big Joe Williams said, again with that deep, rumbling laugh. "Naturally. A safety deposit box in the Hamilton Trust and Savings Bank on Milwaukee Avenue."

The little lawyer counted to ten slowly. Then he started to say, "You're a liar," decided to change to, "You're kidding," and finally was about to settle for, "You're out of your mind."

"I thought it was pure and simple justice to put it in the same bank I took it away from," Big Joe Williams said cheerfully. "And besides, it's the last place anybody would ever look for it. Work quick, will you, Malone? Now that I've gone this far, I'm getting impatient."

"It's practically a matter of hours," Malone promised.

"First thing, I'm going to find Bonnie and take three years of my life out of her hide," the big man said.

"Offer a reward," Malone said, "and I'll help you look."

On the way back he reflected that he hadn't accomplished a great deal. He'd only confirmed what he had believed all along, that Big Joe Williams' loot was tucked away in a good, safe, undetectable place. A sudden and disagreeable thought struck him. It was Big Joe Williams who would turn the money in; he, Malone, hadn't located it. There wasn't going to be any reward.

Oh well, he'd done his good deed for the day. And Big Joe Williams, out of jail, would probably be a profitable client for the future.

Maggie was waiting for him, still looking worried. "I paid the newsstand. And the newspapers have been calling about the McGlintchy thing."

"Tell them my client is innocent and I intend to prove it," Malone growled. "And find out what lawyer handled Inez McGlintchy's will."

There was something in the very back of his mind that refused to come forward. Something maddeningly just beyond his mental fingertips. He knew that it was important, and he couldn't think what it was.

"It's Erwin Smallgrass, of Ballard, Ballard, Ballard and Smallgrass," Maggie called. "I'm getting him."

Mr. Smallgrass was delighted to give his colleague the information, and did. Malone put down the phone, feeling that that was all he needed to finish ruining the day. Inez McGlintchy's small fortune had been a life trust, ending with her death—in this case, her murder. Bob McGlintchy wasn't going to inherit any money at all.

It looked, Malone reflected, as though he was going to be broke for a long time to come. And it also looked as though he had taken on a long and difficult job of defending the football hero in court. Oh well. He'd use the gray shadow. Violent and drunken rage. A gray shadow. Everything went black. A neurotic football player.

"It wasn't really a neurosis," Malone said aloud. "It was Four Roses." That should have made him feel a little better, but it didn't.

He sat for a long time staring at the embossed cigar box on his desk. At last he reached for a cigar, slid off the cellophane, started to light it, and stopped halfway, not moving until the match began to burn his fingers. Then he put down the cigar, reached for the telephone and called Ted Atwater.

"I thought you'd be interested," he said casually. "Big Joe Williams gets out tomorrow. You may get the rent back after all, if he decides he wants his home back."

Then he called von Flanagan. "Meet me at the apartment where the McGlitchy woman was killed. Yes, of course I know what I'm doing."

Then he was on his way.

A white-faced Ted Atwater was in the hall. "Mr. Malone! She asked me to go on an errand. Now she's locked me out. I left my keys in here. She won't let me in. Malone, what is it?"

The superintendent came running, passkeys in hand. Malone reached for them, Ted Atwater beat him to it.

"Wait—" Malone said desperately, pushing forward. Ted Atwater, in a burst of fear and rage, shoved him aside. Something that felt the size of an elephant's foot landed in his eye.

"Wait, damn you," Malone half screamed. "Can't you see, she'll have to kill you to—"

The door was flung open, he was momentarily conscious of a room that had been torn up in a last, wild frenzy of searching, of a small, white-faced, black-haired fury who turned on them. Something hurtled past his head: he had a feeling that it was the survivor of the pair of bronze statuettes. Then von Flanagan arrived, and it was all over.

"If you must know," Malone said crossly, explaining the black eye to Big Joe Williams, "I came in contact with a guided muscle."

He sat down heavily behind his desk. Then he bounded up, opened the file drawer and brought out the gin and two glasses.

"She'd dyed her hair, of course," Malone said, sitting down again. "But that shouldn't have thrown me off. Just one thing started me thinking, and the rest fell into place."

Big Joe Williams lifted his glass in silent appreciation.

"She was sure the money was in the apartment in spite of the searching that had been done," Malone said. "I was half sure myself. After all, you would be pretty damned smart about a hiding place for that kind of cash. But after you went to jail, the apartment was taken over by a bed-ridden old lady and her nurse, and she didn't have a chance to get in and search."

He paused, sipped his gin, and remembered that something would have to be done toward financing his date with the blonde nurse.

"But she waited. The McGlitchys moved in, and she watched for a chance to do a really good job of searching. I should have realized that she'd still have the key you'd given her."

"I thought of that too," Big Joe Williams said, "but it didn't matter to me."

"Well, anyway," the little lawyer said wearily, "She'd changed her name and dyed her hair. Somehow she met the cashier of the Hamilton Bank and married him. She evidently thought

he could unintentionally give her some kind of a hint, Heaven knows why. Or maybe she thought it had been an inside job and he could get her next to the other party without knowing it."

"But it wasn't," the big man said. "I did it myself." There was pride in his voice.

"She saw her chance when the McGlitchys went out to a party," Malone went on. "But Inez went home unexpectedly soon and walked in on the search. Maybe the blow wasn't meant to be quite that hard; we'll never know. But now Edna—Bonnie—saw a Heaven-sent opportunity and talked her husband, poor devil, into taking the apartment. Last night, when she was told that you were on the loose, she knew she had one last chance, and that she had to take it fast and get out of town." He sighed.

"I should have guessed before," he said at last. "It was the cigar box that tipped me off." He opened it, passed it, and took one out. "Yesterday it had been left on the bookcase. Instinctively, without thinking, I put it back where it had always been. People do that

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when they've been around a place a long time. Just as she had done in the apartment. Her husband told me that he'd come home to find all the furniture moved around from the way it had been when they moved in. But I remembered it as exactly the way it had been when I'd seen it when you lived there. She'd remembered it that way too, from the time she spent there with you and—almost unconsciously, perhaps, had moved it back. That should have made me know what had happened right away. Once I knew that, the rest followed."

He didn't add that he'd had a few minutes of horrible fear after he'd called von Flanagan that his hunch wasn't correct.

For a little while he sat playing with his cigar. Things had worked out for everyone else. Bob McGlitchy was a free man, and the chances were unless he met with another heiress, that he'd end up as athletic coach in some small-town high school and, in time, happily married. But he, Malone, wasn't going to get any fee. The bank had its money back, and everyone was very happy about it. But he, Malone, wasn't going to get any reward. Edna, or Bonnie, was in jail, and von Flanagan was very happy about everything. For a moment Malone wondered if Big Joe

Williams would care to finance her defense, and decided that he wouldn't.

It was at that moment that Big Joe Williams put down his cigar, took out his wallet, and began counting out hundred dollar bills until he'd piled up an even ten of them. "You've been talking for a long time about a trip to Bermuda," he said.

Malone looked at the money. "For what?"

"For handling everything so fast," Big Joe Williams said. "And for finding Bonnie." He shoved the bills across the desk.

Malone looked at the bills. He wanted to count them, but he was afraid to touch them. They might disappear. The whole thing, he told himself fuzzily, was a dream.

It was some time before Malone moved or spoke. At last he picked up the bills. "I thought you'd be broke," he said, almost incredulously. "After all, you had to give up the fifty grand."

He riffled the bills. They crinkled. They didn't disappear. "Where did you get all this money?" he asked suspiciously.

Big Joe Williams' smile widened into a broad and happy grin. "Hell's bells, Malone," he said. "The Hamilton Trust and Savings wasn't the only bank I ever robbed!" □

Party Boat

(Continued from page 20)

sailor. Elmo followed them, thinking he might trail them and see where she lived. But they were getting into a taxi as he came out the door. There was no other taxi in sight.

He walked down the street to another bar, momentarily frustrated with his desire for Vera. Damn that Gerald. He'd have to do something about Gerald. Get him out of the way. Maybe he could get Les Branscomb at the *Evening Sun* on his tail, threaten to write an exposé of his peculiar racket. He could tell the cops himself and get Gerald sidelined that way. Yeah, and make an ass of himself.

Two hours later, Elmo was strolling, only slightly drunk, in Casey Square. He saw Gerald cruising along slowly in that black car. Quickly, Elmo loosened his tie and rubbed his hand through his hair; then he sprawled on the bench, chuckling to himself. If this just works, he thought.

In a little while, sure enough, the hairy frankfurters were on his shoulder. "Get up," Gerald said. "Get in the car."

Elmo staggered, faking drunkenness, and looked up at Gerald.

"Oh. It's you again," Gerald said. "Just remember that I *could* take you in. Who'd believe a lush's word against mine?"

Still playing the cop, Elmo thought. But he knows damn well I know better than that; however, if he wants to play . . .

During the drive around Cherokee Park, Elmo let himself sober up quickly. A vision of that blue blouse bulging with a measurement in the upper thirties was constantly on his mind.

On the Grebe when Gerald brought Vera, Elmo was sitting in the middle of the bunk smiling, his clothes locked in a drawer under the bunk.

He smiled, but he didn't say anything to Vera. She smiled without saying anything either. Semantically, they were in complete harmony.

Vera began undressing with sudden eagerness, her eyes on Elmo.

For a moment Elmo watched Gerald batting his long lashes at the foot of the bunk. Suddenly, he liked the red-faced slob, every hairy frankfurter finger on his two hands. He was sorry for him, sorry about the shrapnel bullseye. He'd give him a good performance.

Tomorrow, he'd find a job, but right now he gripped Vera's shoulders and pressed his lips hard against hers.

Gerald stood at the foot of the bunk, and Mona Lisa smiled at the nude gentleman beside her, there on the saloon bulkhead. □



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